Problems of Communism

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The Fruits of Disillusionment

THE Khrushchev revelations about Stalin (and Stalinism) have unleashed a stream of articles, resolutions and statements from various Communist Parties outside the Soviet orbit, as well as from numerous individual party members and sympathizers.[1] Of those emanating from the pens of intellectual fellow-travelers, the two articles by Howard Fast, American author and Stalin Peace Prize winner, deserve special attention. This journal has already published excerpts from the first article. Both together provide insight into the mind of an evidently sincere sympathizer of communism painfully trying to assemble the fragments of his shattered faith.

Mr. Fast's later article appeared in the staunchly anti-Communist liberal weekly, *The New Leader* (July 30, 1956), in reply to a searching letter addressed to him by Eugene Lyons, himself an erstwhile, and now disillusioned, Communist sympathizer. "Your column," wrote Lyons, " . . . attests your shock, despair and, most encouraging, your sense of personal guilt as a long-time Communist. . . . Some people have dismissed your statement as chicanery—a piece of tongue-in-cheek 'self-criticism' prescribed by the party itself for this difficult moment. I think they are mistaken. To me the column rings true. I believe it must ring true to others. . . ." [2]

At the same time, Lyons reproached Fast for indulging in "routine Communist self-deceptions" and "transparent falsehoods." By equating "barbarism and paranoid bloodlust" [Fast's terms] in the Soviet Union with occasional perversions of the right of *habeas corpus* in "capitalist countries," by comparing the acts of individual demagogues in the West with the monstrosities perpetrated by Stalin, Fast can proclaim his "love" for *both* countries, the United States and the USSR, notwithstanding their sundry "faults." By welcoming the exposure of Stalin as a "heartening indication" of change without examining the nature of the exposure (such as its obvious omissions and selectivity), he quiets his own conscience and justifies his basic faith in the USSR. Lyons calls upon Fast to read the numerous *correct* revelations about Stalinism, to make the final (though admittedly painful) break with the past, and to "rejoin the world of free men, where your conscience will be truly at peace and your talents, released from the party-line straitjacket, can really flourish."

HOWEVER complex the psychological background of Fast's rejoinder, his essential reasoning is startlingly simple. In asking him to free himself from his illusions, replies Fast, Lyons is asking him to give up his faith in "democracy . . . socialism . . . the best hopes of mankind, the noblest dreams, the whole shining future of this tormented, confused and harried race of beings to which we both belong." Worse, Lyons wants him to embrace the odious "area of commercial success, where . . . one can dip into the big money—write for national magazines, for television, even Hollywood."

Of course, it does not matter that Lyons' letter actually contained not a word of reproach against the lofty ideals to which Fast so eloquently subscribes; nor that Fast was not asked to replace his allegiance to mankind's "noblest dreams" by an allegiance to "big money." But we must assume that Fast actually believes his own allegations, and this is precisely what makes his case, like that of so many self-deceived intellectuals, so exasperating and, indeed, so tragic.

For Fast is—again like so many of his colleagues the world over—a victim of the "either-or" school of thought, which allows no distinctions and reduces all human problems and values to the simple formula of "for or against," "villain or hero," "socialist or fascist." On the verge of losing his faith, he must save himself by grasping it anew, for beyond it lies an abysmal void. Thus Fast:

> What is this, Mr. Lyons? Does the struggle for freedom, for the hope and dignity of man end because Stalin was a tyrant. . . . ? Shall I join the effort to drive America toward the past because the Soviet Union is moving toward the future? And because there is more freedom here than in Russia, shall I strive to reverse the situation?

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[1] See *The Anti-Stalin Campaign and International Communism—A Selection of Documents*, edited by the Russian Institute, Columbia University, Columbia University Press, New York, 1956, for official CP statements.

[2] *The New Leader*, New York, July 9, 1956.

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And if a reconfirmation of his faith is what he needs, he finds it in the quoted words of a recent traveler to the USSR, who found "that terror and compulsion need not [!] reappear in Soviet life" because "the Soviet people's frame of reference was not drawn by the OGPU," but rather "by the writings of Marx and Engels, of Pushkin and Tolstoy, of Shakespeare and Goethe." He finds it in a passionate invocation of "the ancient Jewish prophets, the Testament, the four Gospels of Jesus Christ, the teaching of that most beloved master, Thomas Jefferson, the wisdom and wit of my own literary mentor, George Bernard Shaw, the scientific socialist theory of Marx and Engels"; he finds it in the comforting thought that he had always stood by the much maligned Party, whose members may perhaps be accused of "stupidity, rigidity, of a failure to measure up to the need of the times—but not . . . of cowardice, dishonor, or an unwillingness to fight in a cause because of the dangers involved"—as if the obdurate defense of a barbaric regime is not in itself an act of dishonor and moral cowardice.

This, then, is the answer that Fast provides—a lame one surely, but also full of real anguish.

FROM this standpoint, there is an important differentiation to be made between Fast's plea and the various apologias that have been uttered by official leaders of Communist parties throughout the world. Fast and the many others who have, for years, deliberately shut their eyes to the accumulation of crimes and injustices in the land of their dreams; or those intellectuals in, say, France, who have embraced the party—with all its "faults" and "distortions"—as the only true historical expression of the will of the "proletariat" in whose service they enlisted—all these may be accused of cowardice and stupidity, whatever the differences that separate them. Yet, when the exposure of harsh reality finally forces them to see the light, their anguish suggests an underlying sincerity, however soiled by years of self-deception or tortuous rationalization.

But when Eugene Dennis, the leader of the American Communist Party, takes responsibility for "some serious mistakes . . . based upon mistaken information"; when the French CP piously "denounces the arbitrary acts of Stalin . . . which are contrary to the principles of Marxism-Leninism"; when Togliatti condemns "the mistakes of [Stalin's] colleagues" in "having allowed him to go on until correction was no longer possible without damage to all concerned"; when the British CP leaders profess to be "deeply shocked by the injustices and crimes which violated the essential principles of socialist democracy and legality and dishonored the noble cause of communism," their words carry little conviction. The leaders of these parties have known all along, perhaps not the details, but assuredly the basic facts concerning Stalin's rise to power. Indeed, as the international Communist movement came to be dominated by Moscow and by Stalin, no room was left within its highest echelons for anyone who was in any serious way opposed to his policies. The changes in leadership, the frequent purges, the *volte-faces*—all these were dictated by, and patterned after, the Soviet Union. In effect, the history of the Communist parties proves them to be miniature replicas of their mother party without the might of a totalitarian apparatus behind them.

When, therefore, these leaders express their surprise at and condemnation of Khrushchev's disclosures, and when they go so far (like Togliatti) as to criticize Moscow for having provided an "unsatisfactory" or "un-Marxist" explanation of Stalin's rise to power, they are in effect covering up for their own crimes as Stalin's accomplices and warning Moscow (in a "brotherly" manner) to be careful lest it destroy the prestige of those who have served it so well and with so much fidelity. The more they denounce, the "cleaner" their own record becomes—or so they would wish their followers and the world at large to believe.

The case of Fast and others like him is different. For years they forced themselves to *disbelieve;* now they have been enabled to *believe*, and the torments that accompany this process are legion. It is, of course, an ironic comment on their peculiar mental framework that they were enabled to divest themselves of some of their illusions *only* after one man, himself a "close comrade-in-arms" of Stalin, had given official sanction to it. But for people accustomed for so long to authoritarian thinking, this is perhaps the only thing to do. There will be those who accept the Soviet explanations at face value and carry on as if nothing has happened. But it is also fair to predict that there will be people—the embarrassing rationalizations and florid party resolutions notwithstanding—who will find enough strength to think independently and to act independently. In this sense, Fast's articles may prove to be among the first signs of a thaw within the monolithic ranks of Communist supporters abroad—complementing, and possibly equalling in its effects, the thaw that is forcing its way through the rigid structure of the Soviet system itself.

A. B.

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The Aftermath of Destalinization

By JANE DEGRAS and WATER Z. LAQUEUR

EVEN though it is not yet possible to discern the end results of the startling process of change unleashed in the Soviet Union by the Twentieth Party Congress of last February, enough has already transpired to suggest that the USSR may well be passing through a period of its history comparable, perhaps, in importance to the crucial months of 1917 which saw the death of Tsarism and the emergence of the Soviet state.

The two periods, while comparable in significance, are of course basically different. The upheaval of 1917 was a revolution from below; what has been happening in the Soviet Union since February 1956 is the introduction of certain important reforms decided and carried out from above, though it is likely that the drive against the so-called cult of the individual and the secret Khrushchev indictment of Stalin responded at least in part to pressures from below, however indirect.

Whatever its impulsion, there can be no doubt that the main characteristic of the recent period has been the effort of the Soviet leaders to keep the "reform movement" under control: to debunk Stalin, but not to write him off altogether; to discard the most odious features of Stalinist dictatorship while preserving much of its basic structure; to grant more freedom, but not too much of it. In this effort they have undoubtedly succeeded for the time being, for the situation is clearly under control. Whether the forces they have released—or were compelled to release—may not have far wider repercussions in the future is another question.

The Cautious Approach on Stalin

FROM the beginning it has been evident that the Soviet leaders wished to avoid focusing too much attention on the denigration of Stalin. At the Twentieth Congress almost 90 percent of the speeches dealt not with Stalin or Stalinism but with current economic problems, and the same proportion was maintained in subsequent *Pravda* editorials. Khrushchev himself declared in his Congress report that in present conditions the economic side of Marxist doctrine is of greater relevance than any other aspect of Communist theorizing.[1] It is tacitly assumed that the Stalin era is a thing of the past and will never return; and with so many immediate problems of greater importance to tackle, why waste time in historical retrospection?

In any case, *Agitprop* made a brave effort to prevent Soviet citizens from occupying their thoughts too much with Stalin's misdeeds. To this day the famous Khrushchev report has not been published in the Soviet Union despite the fact that it elicited feverish discussion in Communist parties everywhere else in the world. It can be taken for granted that many Soviet party members have been verbally

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[1] Noting Lenin's teaching that different aspects of Marxism assume prominence at different periods, Khrushchev remarked: "Now, when our society is working to attain high labor productivity and accomplish the basic economic task of the USSR, the economic aspect of Marxist theory, questions of practical economics, come to the fore." *Pravda*, February 15, 1956.

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informed of its contents in broad outline; but to the large majority of citizens the news was broken far more gently—and only part of it at that.

How gently and cautiously is apparent from the editorials published in *Kommunist*, the biweekly ideological organ of the CPSU. The No. 3 (1956) issue of the journal, which summarized the proceedings of the Twentieth Congress, ignored Stalin. There was, to be sure, some criticism of the "cult of the individual," but it was couched in highly abstract, academic terms and mentioned no names. Declared *Kommunist:*

> . . . [the cult] caused workers on the ideological front to lose faith in their power and ability to advance theory, and gave rise to the belief that the development and enrichment of Marxist-Leninist theory was the task of the select. The result was that the development of revolutionary theory, the role of our party's collective thought, and the role of brother parties were all ignored.

The subsequent issue (No. 4, 1956) took the logical next step. It introduced Stalin's name for the first time in this derogatory context:

> These violations [of the norms of party life and the principles of party control] are directly linked with the personality cult, widespread in theory and practice but alien to the spirit of Marxism-Leninism: specifically, with the cult of J. V. Stalin.

In its next (No. 5) issue the journal went still further. During the latter period of Stalin's life, it specified, the cult assumed ugly forms and caused serious damage to the cause of communism. But this accusation was at once followed by a warning against unbridled attacks on Stalin. He was a "contradictory personality" all right, but he also had considerable merit as a "great Marxist" and as a staunch fighter for the general line of the party against Trotskyites, Bukharinites and other "deviationists."

So the public dethronement of Stalin went ahead gradually and cautiously: two steps forward, one step back. The No. 9 issue of *Kommunist*, which appeared early in July, published several hitherto undivulged documents of Lenin, including the famous "testament," which admittedly must make strange reading for a generation of young Soviet citizens brought up on Stalin's official biography.

In the meantime the Soviet leaders proceeded to effect various liberalizing reforms designed to underline and implement the move away from Stalinism. The Cominform was dissolved; the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet published decrees at high speed—reducing the length of work-days, providing for monthly advances to *kolkhozniks*, abolishing the ill-famed "special courts" of 1934, giving workers the right to change jobs on two weeks' notice without penalty, and so on.

Ferment and "Unhealthy Tendencies"

BUT despite these placatory measures and the official efforts to soften the impact of the anti-Stalin move on the public mind, the ideological ferment set in motion by the move, especially among the intelligentsia, assumed somewhat disturbing proportions. It appears that this came as something of a surprise to the Soviet leaders, who evidently had assumed that the present change, like so many previous changes, would not prove too difficult.

Behind this miscalculation lies the fact that the Soviet leaders, whatever their other merits, are not intellectuals strictly speaking; and, in addition, there has been no basic ideological discussion in the Soviet Union for many years. There have been debates whether to interpret a certain Stalin quotation one way or another, whether to sow maize or wheat in Siberia, and so on; but no political debate has taken place within the party, let alone the country at large, since 1927–28.

Still, the Soviet leaders' misjudgment is not easy to explain. One hardly need be an intellectual to be shocked by the revelation of Stalin's misdeeds—and there is reason to believe that the reactions produced among the *Komsomol*, for example, were considerable. But certainly the intelligentsia, more than any other section of the population, was directly affected by the revelations.

A few illustrations should suffice. The famous *Kratkii Kurs* has served for almost 20 years as the basic textbook of instructions for all party members, comparable in its function only to the Bible in a more pious age. Now, suddenly, this work—providing guidance (and quotations) for all imaginable situations—was withdrawn, and a substitute cannot be expected for a year or more. The result is a considerable amount of ideological confusion.

Or take this even more revealing admission, which goes right down to the essence of Soviet ideology: Criticising the books of certain Western authors (such as G. Wetter and Bochenski) on dialectical materialism, a Soviet writer in the party philosophical review *Voprosi Filosofii* argues that these works should be rejected because they are based not on real sources but "mainly on various popular philosophical publications issued in the Soviet Union in recent years." [2] He then calmly asserts that the latter were erroneous, a statement tantamount to a disavowal of the whole philosophy of the Stalin era. It may be doubted that the author quite realized the implications of his argument, but that he advanced it indicates how the

[2] *Voprosi Filosofii*, No. 3, 1956, p. 246.

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revelations of the Twentieth Congress have weakened the monolithic certainty of the Stalin era.

It can be taken for granted that the intention of the Soviet leaders is to replace the old orthodoxy by a new one, and indeed efforts are now being made in this direction. But this is more easily said than done, especially since the new orthodoxy has to be less crude than its Stalinist predecessor. In the meantime the party has found itself obliged to cope with a spate of unusually vocal criticisms, some not so easy to answer.

It was comparatively easy, for example, to denounce the Soviet economist, L. D. Yaroshenko, and some others who, "under the guise of condemning the cult of the individual," tried "to cast doubt on the correctness of the party's policy," and hence, by inference, on the party leadership.[3] But what about those who criticized not the leaders but party principles? And there were apparently quite a few of them, especially among writers and artists. Soviet periodicals recently have made several references to "unhealthy tendencies among politically immature writers and artists," charging them specifically with adopting a conciliatory attitude toward Western ideas—the outcome of a misguided attempt to extend coexistence to the ideological plane.[4] It has also been acknowledged that at a number of meetings intellectuals have pressed for greater freedom. Said *Literaturnaia Gazeta:*

> It is surprising to find that there are people who have forgotten all about "*partiinost*" in literature . . . side by side with light-minded demagogues there are others who speak with an alien voice: literature, they say, should not be the servant of politics.[5]

This, of course, is unacceptable to the party leaders, and the demand for greater independence of thought and expression has been rejected.

Questions and Answers

MEANWHILE the demand for a "profound Marxist explanation" of the Stalin era grew among the Communist parties abroad. (For all we know, it has also grown inside the Soviet Union, although the only public reference so far made there to the "so-called Khrushchev report" was contained in the abridged translation of the statement of the American Communist leader, Eugene Dennis [New York *Daily Worker*, June 18, 1956], published in *Pravda* on June 27.)

Among the foreign Communist leaders, Italy's Palmiro Togliatti suggested that the bureaucratization of the party apparatus might have had something to do with the growth of Stalin's personal rule, and he bluntly asserted that "the Soviet model cannot and must not any longer be obligatory" for the world Communist movement.[6] Others argue that it was all very well to explain Stalin's rule by the pressures of various external and internal dangers, but had not Stalin, they asked, deliberately exaggerated these dangers in order to strengthen his position? Was it enough merely to assert, without producing corroborative evidence, that Stalinism did not grow out of the conditions of Soviet society? Was it not possible to go on forever justifying dictatorship, just as Stalin had done, by reference to "enemies," internal and external?

The Soviet leaders obviously could not allow themselves to be drawn into a genuine discussion of the more searching questions. The subject was too dangerous ideologically, quite apart from the fact that it would have involved airing their own role in the Stalin era. But something had to be done, at least as a stopgap, to coordinate the theoretical line of the various Communist parties and to give party members in the Soviet Union itself some guidance. The result was the publication in *Pravda*, on July 2, of a resolution of the CPSU Central Committee, which had adopted it on June 30.

It is a long statement, opening with the remark that the decisions of the Twentieth Congress had caused confusion in imperialist quarters. This no doubt was intended to offset the admission that the party's own supporters were no less perplexed and far more embarrassed. The rest of the resolution, shorn of irrelevancies, has two main features: first, a denial that Stalin had as all-pervasive an influence as the Twentieth Congress revelations had apparently been taken to indicate; second, an explanation for the "cult of the individual" based on "objective historical conditions."

On the first point, the resolution maintained that, even with Stalin's worst excesses, the Soviet state remained what Lenin had made it. All that Stalin's errors and perversions of Marxism-Leninism had done was to slow down the pace of democratic development and hamper the growth of initiative. The three distinguishing characteristics of the Soviet system—social ownership of the means of production, the alliance of the industrial working class and peasantry, and the "friendship of peoples"—persisted unchanged; hence the cult of Stalin's personality was but an irrelevant excrescence. (The persistent use of the term "personality cult" as a synonym

[3] *Pravda*, April 5, 1956.

[4] For example, see *Kommunist*, No. 5, 1956, p. 70, and No. 9, 1956. p. 11.

[5] May 8, 1956.

[6] Interview in *Nuovi Argomenti*, No. 20, June 16, 1956.

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AS THE TWIG IS BENT . . .

Why have you given me a failing mark? I admitted my mistake!

From *Krokodil*, Moscow, July 20, 1956.

for a generation of tyranny and terror is itself indicative of the Soviet leaders' desire to play down the the importance of the whole affair.)

To a simple outsider, of course, this reasoning might seem to confirm rather than negate the suspicion voiced abroad that the evils of Stalinism were inherent in the nature of Soviet society. For if twenty years of tyrannical misrule made no difference, if that misrule could go on so long without disturbance to the cardinal features of Soviet society (which is said to require no institutional changes), what guarantee does that society offer against a repetition of the same evils?

On this crucial point the resolution is explicit, if quite unconvincing. "It would be a gross mistake," it declared, "to look to the nature of the Soviet social system for the source of the cult." On the contrary, the attack on the cult and on Stalin "will lead to enormous positive results"; it "creates firm guarantees that in the future there can never again appear in our party or our country phenomena similar to the cult of the individual."

This is a rather obvious, if natural, begging of the question. Clearly the Soviet leaders cannot allow criticism and debate to strike too deep, for if the nature of the regime be opened to question, what would become of the present rulers' claim to legitimacy? Might it not lead to admission of the possibility of alternative parties and alternative rulers? Under no circumstances, therefore, can Stalin's heirs admit that it was only within a Communist totalitarian system that Stalin could have concentrated such power in his own hands.

Juggling With History

THE Central Committee's analysis of the "objective historical conditions" in which this unhappy phenomenon occurred should be read in conjunction with the Khrushchev "secret speech," for this serves to bring out the confusion which the resolution deliberately sought to introduce. In the speech Stalin's degeneration was said to have begun in 1934. On the other hand, the CC resolution sought to explain the Stalin cult by the existence of "unimaginable difficulties and obstacles" which called for "iron discipline, tireless vigilance, and strictest centralization," all in "conditions of capitalist encirclement."

There is a clear discrepancy between these two statements, for, in fact, the middle thirties were a period—brief, it is true—of relaxation in the Soviet Union. The "class enemy," the kulaks, had been liquidated and the most brutal phase of forced collectivization and industrialization was over; the "most democratic constitution in the world" was being drafted; it had been officially announced in the spring of 1933 that the foundations of socialism had been laid; bread rationing was ended. Thus, internally, the "unimaginable difficulties and obstacles" had been surmounted before the Stalin cult, by Khrushchev's reckoning, began to raise its ugly head.

Externally, the Nazi threat was no longer minimized in 1934, but "capitalist encirclement" is hardly an accurate description of the period which saw the negotiation of mutual assistance pacts with France and Czechoslovakia, the restoration of relations with the United States, and the enthusiastic reception in Moscow of British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden and other visiting statesmen from the West.

Nor can this curiously dated degeneration have taken Stalin's colleagues by surprise, for they had been warned twelve years earlier—and by Lenin himself. The resolution says lamely that in 1924, after Lenin's death, "it was recognized as expedient

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to leave Stalin in the post of Secretary General." Why this was decided in the face of Lenin's explicit advice that Stalin be removed is not answered. The resolution then jumps the whole 10 years between 1924 and the Seventeenth Party Congress of 1934 in one smooth phrase: "Later on, however, Stalin . . . came to believe in his own infallibility" and "found himself virtually beyond criticism." But nobody finds himself beyond criticism unless put there by the behavior of his colleagues. Willing or reluctant, they were accomplices—and beneficiaries—of the cult they now condemn.

In another bit of historical juggling, the resolution states: "There were certain periods, during the war for example, when unilateral acts by Stalin were sharply curbed and . . . members of the Central Committee . . . took over certain sectors of activity." It goes on:

> After victory the negative consequences of the cult of the individual again made themselves strongly felt. But immediately after Stalin's death the Leninist core of the Central Committee set a resolute course against the cult of the individual and its grave consequences.

The questions raised in these passages are too numerous to deal with here. If Stalin's powers could be curbed in wartime, when unity and centralized command were imperative, why not before the war when the need was less? How was it, too, that he was allowed to resume unfettered power after the return of peace? What happened during the 8 years between the end of the war and Stalin's death? If victory had been insured by restricting Stalin's omnipotence, why was it restored to him, and by whom?

Non Mea Culpa

NOWHERE does the resolution provide satisfactory answers, if any, to these embarrassing questions. But its authors were clearly at pains to exonerate the Central Committee—that is, themselves—of blame for their long complicity in Stalin's crimes. The resolution reiterates: "It cannot be said that there was no opposition to the negative developments which arose from the cult of the individual." The evident weakness of this assertion is understandable, for those who seriously opposed Stalin did not survive to be numbered among the present Soviet leaders.

The resolution implicitly admits the lack of real opposition by asking "why, then, these people [the Central Committee] did not take an open stand against Stalin and remove him from leadership?" Their failure to do so is explained by adducing four reasons:

First, the Soviet people trusted Stalin, and so long as the cult of the individual prevailed, they ascribed all successes in building socialism to him. This, quite apart from being untrue, is a circular argument: to explain a cult by its own existence does not take one very far.

Second, because of their trust in Stalin, the people would not have understood and supported any action against him. But who, then, filled the forced labor camps? And is it true that, after a generation of Marxist training, the Soviet people still were unable to distinguish between tyranny and leadership?

Third, opposition would have been dangerous in conditions of capitalist encirclement. But with the USSR flanked by the people's democracies on the west and Communist China on the east, where was "capitalist encirclement" in the last 5 years of Stalin's life?

Finally, the resolution pleads ignorance "until the exposure of the Beria gang"—an excuse so grotesque that it is difficult to deal with by any normal process of reasoning. Ignorance of what, and for how long? The most brutal and crushing wave of terror preceded Beria's appointment as chief of police. And what claim to rulership can be sustained by a group of men who plead ignorance of what was happening in their country over a period of twenty years?

The poverty and hollowness of these explanations are too obvious to require further analysis. But the reactions to them throughout the USSR, at least as reported in the Soviet press, were in the best Stalinist tradition. Meetings of factory workers "enthusiastically endorsed" the CC resolution, which met with "unanimous approval" and "ardent support." The fraternal parties also decided to accept it. The British *Daily Worker*, for example, described it as a profound and fully satisfactory analysis of the circumstances." [7]

Anticlimax: The Supreme Soviet

Thus, order was restored in the Soviet house, and the altered party line is again in operation at home and abroad—at least for the time being. It is not surprising, then, that earlier expectations of new dramatic happenings at the July session of the Supreme Soviet in Moscow were unfulfilled.

The session lasted 5 days, and its proceedings gave little evidence of any marked democratization under the new line. It dutifully ratified all decrees passed by the Presidium since the last Supreme Soviet session in December 1955; acceded to the request of the Karelo-Finnish Republic to be accepted as an Autonomous

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[7] Statement of the Executive Committee of the British Communist Party, July 14, 1956, London *Daily Worker*, July 16, 1956.

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Republic within the RSFSR; issued an appeal to all countries on disarmament and banning nuclear weapons; endorsed an appeal made by the Japanese Parliament last February for a nuclear ban; and passed a new pensions bill (which admittedly brings some long overdue benefits to the Soviet nonagricultural population) into law.

As always, it is interesting to note what the Supreme Soviet did not do. There was little in its proceedings that reflected the events of the 6 months since it last met. Premier Bulganin did not report on his visit to Britain, although the 1955 Asian tour of the Soviet leaders had been reported at the December session; nor did Foreign Minister Shepilov report on his visit to Egypt and neighboring countries. No deputy asked about the progress of the new penal code promised some years ago, or about the new wage structure said to be in preparation. At the December session Khrushchev had derided the idea that the Cominform had outlived its usefulness; yet, at the recent session, he made no attempt to justify the intervening reversal of this attitude.

In accord with the spirit of the times, the Soviet rulers are trying to give the Supreme Soviet the appearance of greater legislative authority, to lend some substance to its democratic facade by convening it more frequently and allowing occasional important announcements (such as Malenkov's resignation in March 1955) to be made from its platform. But the last session can hardly be regarded as demonstrating that it has become any less of a parody of a genuine legislative assembly, or as offering any real promise that it can achieve such status within the existing Soviet political framework.

* * *

THE question remains, of course, whether that framework itself may not eventually change if the cautious program of reforms instituted under the aegis of destalinization continues. While the possibility cannot be ruled out, present evidence hardly supports an affirmative answer. The events of the past months demonstrate that Stalin's heirs are anxious to rid themselves of the shadow of Stalinism, but at the same time to retain most of its real substance. They are making piecemeal concessions toward greater freedom, but the process of liberalization is carefully controlled so as not to jeopardize the foundations of their dictatorial power.

The Soviet leaders quite evidently underestimated the far-reaching repercussions which the Twentieth Congress revelations on Stalin would produce in the Communist world. At present they have succeeded in restoring a surface appearance of discipline and calm, but there are signs that beneath the surface ideological ferment continues. Stalin has been repudiated, but the end consequences of the act of repudiation for his successors are still incalculable.

"Once Bitten Twice Shy"

The success which Communist Popular Front tactics are likely to have in the months ahead depends on the degree to which the Communists can persuade Socialists and Left-wing opinion in Western Europe that they are really reformed characters and that even the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies are undergoing a process of genuine "liberalization." The widespread assumption that the turn against Stalin was part of a great movement of moral reform in Russia, sponsored by those who were the closest associates of his tyranny, is very conducive to the creation of a climate of opinion in which the Trojan Horse would be admitted within the walls. But there has never been a time when democrats have had more reason to stand on their principles or less reason to overlook the essential nature of communism, whether in its Leninist, Stalinist or Khrushchevian versions. The fruits of the totalitarian party-state are now admitted in Moscow to have been such as liberal critics always predicted that they would be. The question is how far the lesson has been learnt, to what extent in the future the peoples of the West are again going to yield to the fascination of a doctrine which has such results. Communism today is like a confidence trickster who, having confessed to his victim that he has been swindling him for years, coolly proposes to let bygones be bygones and start again with another little loan. But the once bitten should be twice shy.

—From "The Heirs of Stalin," by G. F. Hudson, The Twentieth Century, *London, August 1956, p. 113.*

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Is Russia Going Titoist?

By ERNST HALPERIN

Editors' Note: At this time, with the Communist world in the throes of a political and ideological crisis, with developments following each other in lightning succession, it is important not only to survey the past and the present, but also to cast a glance into the uncertain future, to discern trends both in their current configuration and from the standpoint of their impact on the further development of communism within and outside the Soviet orbit.

This is precisely what Mr. Halperin's article attempts to do. In concluding that the Soviet Union is likely to adopt some essential features of Titoist Yugoslavia, he is not basing himself on irrefutable evidence (for obviously such evidence does not exist), but rather on a keen analysis of the implications of the recent Soviet-Yugoslav rapprochement. "Is Russia Going Titoist" is presented here as the first of a series of articles dealing with the future of communism, in the hope of initiating a wide discussion of what is undoubtedly one of the most challenging topics today.

TITOISM is a device for wrapping necessary reforms and concessions in an attractive ideological cloak. Six years ago, in 1950, Marshal Tito was compelled to undertake a "destalinization" of the economic, political and ideological affairs of his country. With the aid of "Titoist" doctrine he succeeded in converting this retreat into a powerful ideological offensive.

The leaders of the Soviet Union today find themselves in a dilemma similar to that which Tito faced in 1949–50. The visit to Belgrade by Khrushchev, Bulganin and Mikoyan in May 1955, the Belgrade declaration of June 2, 1955, Tito's 3-week visit to the Soviet Union in June 1956, and the agreement signed on that occasion providing for collaboration between the two governments and parties seem to indicate more than an attempt on Moscow's part to patch up differences in the interest of Communist solidarity. There are definite signs, in this author's opinion, that the Soviet leaders are toying with the idea of utilizing Titoist formulas and slogans in solving their own pressing domestic problems. An understanding of this view requires a re-examination of the internal situation in Yugoslavia that gave impetus to Tito's dramatic reforms of 1950, through which "Titoism" has come to mean a positive concept of socialist economic development as well as a symbol of independence from Moscow.

The Crisis Period: 1948–50

PRIOR to 1950, the economy of Communist Yugoslavia was rigorously centralized and fully planned on the Stalinist pattern. A highly ambitious Five-Year Plan was underway. Among the main objectives of this plan were the laying of the foundations of New Belgrade, a city to be built for a population of 250,000 over an estimated 15-year period; the construction of a 400-kilometer superhighway between Belgrade and Zagreb; drainage of a portion of Lake Scutari; and construction of numerous dams, hydroelectric plants, and factories.

This forced-march industrialization led of necessity to collectivization of agriculture. Collectivization releases manpower for industry and, furthermore, enables the organs of party and state to exercise much more effective control over agricultural production than would be possible with even the most stringent supervision of independent farmers.

Visitors spending a few days or weeks in Yugoslavia got an impression of universal work fever and fantastic activity. But anyone staying longer soon became

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aware that this atmosphere was largely illusory. Construction achievements, for example, were incessantly touted, but while there were construction sites everywhere, no buildings seemed to go up; deterioration was evident everywhere in factory installations, housing and public transport. And as the production figures announced in the press rose higher and higher, the shortage of goods grew more severe.

Government revenues were far from sufficient to finance the construction program. The mint had to supply the money required, and the currency deteriorated rapidly. Whereas the official rate of exchange of the dinar remained at the fictitious ratio of 50 to the dollar, the free rate sometimes dropped as low as 700 to 800 to the dollar. Since prices of rationed consumer goods as well as wages and charges for public services were frozen at a low level, the devaluation of the currency exercised a tremendous impact on the free and black markets. A critically large proportion of rationed goods was hoarded for purposes of resale, or simply vanished on their way to the stores, to reappear later on the black market.

The shortage of goods was further aggravated by the breakdown of the government trading system. Distribution of essential rationed foods broke down. Time and again, all or part of the fat ration was not issued. Meat was available only once or twice a month. Items likes cigarettes and matches were alternately unavailable for weeks at a time. The supply of bread was reasonably adequate in the two largest cities, Belgrade and Zagreb, but not elsewhere.

In the villages and smaller towns, stringent enforcement of compulsory deliveries and a production strike of the farmers resulted in an even greater scarcity of foodstuffs. Farmers frequently had to go to the cities to buy fat and bread at high prices from ration card holders of privileged category. This situation led to a number of uprisings in May 1950 in western Bosnia and eastern Croatia, regions which had been strongholds of the Communist partisan movement during the war.

The whole drive for industrialization was carried on during the time when the Cominform countries maintained an unremitting economic blockade against Yugoslavia and normal trade relations were not yet established with the West. Tito and his government probably realized as early as 1948 that the Five-Year Plan could not be carried out and would have to be called off sooner or later. However, after the break with Moscow the regime apparently felt it had to go on with the industrialization campaign to keep up morale among the party cadres while they got over the shock of expulsion from the Cominform.

A Plan For Reform

BY the end of 1949 at the latest, it apparently became plain to the party leaders that the situation could not continue and that drastic measures had to be taken to avert the collapse of the Yugoslav economy. The first step toward reform was the adoption in January 1950 of measures for administrative decentralization. Constitutionally, Yugoslavia, like the Soviet Union, is a federal union of several republics. Under the new decrees, a number of federal ministries were disbanded and their functions transferred to the corresponding ministries in the republics, much like what now, in August 1956, has happened in the Soviet Union.

The actual beginning of the great reform and with it the birthday of the Titoist ideology must, however, be dated from June 26, 1950. On this day the Yugoslav federal parliament enacted with its customary unanimity the Basic Law on Management of State Economic Enterprises and Higher Economic Associations by the Workers' Collectives.

This law provided that plant directors, who for the present were still to be appointed by the state, would be assisted by managing boards staffed by members of workers' councils, which were to be elected by the entire work force. The functions of a managing board were to include drawing up the annual plan and monthly production schedules of an enterprise, establishing operating regulations, generally supervising the management, making final decisions on executive appointments in the enterprise and on workers' grievances, *etc.* The workers' council was empowered to pass on plans, operating regulations, the budget, the balance sheet, and other miscellaneous measures taken by the managing boards. The powers of these bodies were further extended later on. Specifically, the workers' council or the general meeting of plant employees was given the right to award bonuses and to decide upon the use of operating surpluses.

Under a fully planned economy, such as the Yugoslav Communists had organized on the Soviet pattern, most of the powers of workers' committees and workers' councils would, of course, have remained a dead letter, since all functions of economic enterprise in such a system, including planning, allocation of raw materials, and operating regulations, are prescribed in minutest detail from above, by the ministry. This kind of planned economy, however, was being gradually liquidated in Yugoslavia.

The individual plant became the "operating unit" of the national economy; it not only had to set up its own production programs but to arrange for its

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supply of raw materials and its sales. Theoretically, the government retained only the right to fix the ratio of investment in the various branches of the economy, though in practice it continued to disrupt the natural process of economic life by arbitrary interference in countless instances.

Nevertheless, the Titoist economic system has implicit in it the concept of a free market economy. To be sure, it is a market economy without private enterprise. The functions of the entrepreneur are taken over by the collective of workers and employers acting through its organs, the workers' council and the managing board. Thus, in principle, it is the members of the labor force themselves who decide on the nature and scale of production and the proportion of investment. It is up to them to obtain orders and in general to assure themselves of a market for their products. They share in the profits and are liable for operating losses with a portion of their wages; they bear the responsibility for layoffs and other economy measures; and if the enterprise operates continuously at a loss and the government does not regard it as important enough to warrant subsidies, they face the possibility of bankruptcy and the loss of their jobs.

This system has not yet fully matured, and some important questions—*e.g.*, how to prevent undesirable monopolistic developments—are still awaiting clarification. But this much can already be said: the system has proved itself vastly superior to the Stalinist system of a fully planned economy. It has the great advantages of every market economy, namely flexibility and adaptability; above all, it eliminates the chief defect of all socialist economic systems in existence—the separation of production and distribution. The employees of a plant are not simply concerned, as in the Soviet system, with achieving the greatest possible output regardless of cost, quality or marketability; they have the utmost interest in putting good and salable products on the market, and doing it in a manner assuring the greatest possible returns.

Emergence of a New Ideology

THE immediate impulse for Tito's sweeping economic reform was, as mentioned, the immense practical difficulties confronting the Yugoslav economy in 1950. Inflation had to be halted and national bankruptcy averted. This called for drastic economy measures, suspension of work on numerous construction projects of the Five-Year Plan, and reduction of the vastly inflated government bureaucracy, which could only be achieved by a drastic program of decentralization.

The linking of these measures with a large-scale ideological offensive was aimed at avoiding any impression of a retreat, which might have demoralized the party cadres and perhaps driven them into the Cominform camp. The regime's unpalatable and harsh program was convincingly represented as a significant and desirable forward step toward socialism. This does not mean, of course, that the entire ideological offensive, the whole transition to the new Titoist ideology, was merely a clever trick to camouflage troublesome measures of monetary policy. It was actually a move to replace one economic system, which had broken down, with another and better one. The substitution was reflected ideologically in the change to "Titoist" doctrine.

The ideological offensive was opened by Marshal Tito himself in a speech to parliament on June 26, 1950, proposing adoption of the Basic Law on Management of State Enterprises by Workers' Collectives. In this speech Tito described the Basic Law as a practical application of the action slogan of the working-class movement: "The factories for the workers." He also hailed it as a return to the Leninist doctrine of the *withering away of the state*, which Stalin had drastically revised.

To explain this, a digression into theory is necessary.

ACCORDING to Marx and Engels, the state is the product of class antagonisms, the device of the ruling class to suppress and hold down the exploited classes. From this it follows logically that once a classless society has been established—that is, after elimination of class conflicts—the state loses its purpose and must disappear. On the basis of this theory, Lenin in his *State and Revolution* set up a timetable for the disappearance of the state after the revolution:

Phase One is the dictatorship of the proletariat. There is still need for the state to suppress the overthrown class enemies, but since the working class constitutes the great majority of the population, this task is relatively easy: "The people . . . can suppress the exploiters . . . with a very simple machine, almost without a machine, by the simple organization of armed masses . . ."[1] *Phase Two* is socialism. The new society stills bears the stamp of the old society; the state, *i.e.*, that simple machine which under the dictatorship of the proletariat takes the place of the complex machinery of the bourgeois state does begin to wither away, but this process can only be completed in the *third or higher phase*, communism.

[1] V. I. Lenin, "State and Revolution," *Selected Works*, Moscow, 1952, Part I, Vol. II, p. 293.

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State and Revolution was written in the summer of 1917, that is, a few months before the October Revolution, and as Lenin explicitly states in the preface the pamphlet was conceived as an action program for the immediate future. Lenin's "withering state," however, never materialized—or rather dematerialized. The new masters of Russia during the first phase of their rule could not, any more than the Tsar in his day, get along with a simple machine of suppression—or "almost without a machine." And after Stalin had announced the transition to Phase Two, that of socialism, the state apparatus still gave no sign of withering away; on the contrary, it mushroomed to tremendous proportions.

It was inevitable, especially after the great purges, that doubts should arise in the minds of the party cadres, who knew their *State and Revolution* by heart. Was it in any way possible to reconcile what was happening with the teachings of Lenin? Could there still be any talk of a "withering away" of the state under such circumstances? It is doubtful, of course, whether anyone in the atmosphere of terror then raging had the courage to utter this question; but even unasked, it was in the air and Stalin had to provide an answer. This he attempted to do in a speech to the Eighteenth Party Congress on March 10, 1939.

In great detail he tried to show that the doctrine of Marx and Engels could not be applied to the Soviet state because the fathers of Marxism and Leninism had given no thought to the special circumstances of a country subsisting under "capitalist encirclement." He then developed the following conclusion with reference to Phase Two, the phase of socialism in the post-revolutionary Soviet state:

In place of this function of suppression, the state acquired the function of protecting socialist property from thieves and pilferers of the people's property. The function of defending the country militarily from foreign attack fully remained; consequently, the Red Army and the Navy also fully remained, as did the punitive organs and the intelligence service, which are indispensable for the detection and punishment of the spies, assassins, and wreckers sent into our country by foreign espionage services. The function of economic organization and cultural education by the state organs also remained and was developed to the full. Now the main task of our state inside the country is the work of peaceful economic organization and cultural education. As for our army, punitive organs and intelligence service, their edge is no longer turned to the inside of the country but to the outside, against external enemies.[2]

[2] J. V. Stalin, "Report on the Work of the Central Committee of the CPSU (b) to the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party," in his *Problems of Leninism*, Moscow, 1953, p. 797.

Tito's Challenge

THIS revision of the doctrine of the withering away of the state was of deepest political significance since it provided the ideological justification for the whole Stalinist system of state and society: the arbitrary rule of the bureaucracy and the police terror which epitomized Stalinism. Until 1950 Stalin's doctrine remained unchallenged throughout the Communist orbit. Then, however, Tito decided to air the issues long raised by the outside world. He declared:

In 1939, it could really be said that the Soviet Union was entirely surrounded by capitalist countries. But after World War II, when a whole series of new socialist states emerged in the proximity of the Soviet Union, there could no longer be any question of capitalist encirclement of the Soviet Union. To say that the functions of the state as an armed force, not only of the army but also of the so-called punitive organs, are directed only outwards means talking with no connection with reality, just as [such talk] has no connection with the present situation in the Soviet Union. What is the tremendous bureaucratic, centralistic apparatus doing? Are their functions directed outwards? Who deports millions of citizens of various nationalities to Siberia and the Far North? Can anyone claim that these are measures against the class enemy, can anyone say that whole nations are a class to be destroyed? Who is obstructing the struggle of opinions in the Soviet Union? Is not all this being done by one of the most centralized, most bureaucratic state apparatuses, which bears no resemblance whatsoever to a state machine that is withering away?[3]

Tito went on to invoke Lenin's view that the proletariat had use only for an atrophying state. The Yugoslav state, he declared, was precisely such an apparatus:

Where is the beginning of this withering away process in our country? I shall mention only the following examples. First, decentralization of the state administration, especially in economy. Secondly, turning over the factories and economic enterprises in general to the working collectives to manage themselves, *etc.* The decentralization of the economy and of political, cultural and other aspects of life is not only profoundly democratic but has inherent in it the seeds of withering away not only of centralism, but of the state in general, as a machine of force.[4]

Tito stated further:

From now on, the state ownership of the means of production—factories, mines, railways—is passing gradually on to a higher form of socialist ownership. State ownership is the lowest form of social ownership, and not the highest as the leaders of the USSR consider it to be. Therein lies our road to socialism and that is the only right road as regards the withering away of state functions in the economy. Let the Cominformists remember that their slanderous

[3] Josip Broz Tito, *Workers Manage Factories in Yugoslavia*, Jogostampa, Belgrade, 1950 (English edition), p. 29.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 24.

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hue and cry cannot obscure the correctness of our building of socialism.[5]

IT is not necessary here to go into the question of whether the Yugoslav system actually represents a return to Leninism. There is good reason for arguing that what Engels and Lenin had in mind was the atrophy of the very branches of the state which are still powerful in Yugoslavia—the army, police, courts—rather than decentralization of the economy and establishment of a market economy. Be that as it may, pronounced anarcho-syndicalist elements can be discerned in the new Yugoslav economic concepts.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

When challenged on this score, Yugoslav Communists would no doubt answer with the ever-useful dictum of Lenin that Marxian theory is neither finished nor inviolate, that it must be developed further independently. More significant and less easy to brush aside is another objection to Titoism, namely, that his economic system is in the last analysis incompatible with the existence of a totalitarian party, and that it cannot function with any degree of efficiency or be called democratic so long as industrial plants are controlled by cells of the party of totalitarian dictatorship.

It has become a truism that in any type of organi-

WHAT IS MEANT BY "DEMOCRATIZATION" AND "DECENTRALIZATION"?

. . . our party placed as the main task before itself and before all of society the struggle against bureaucracy . . . The chief weapon and political instrument in this struggle was the effort to broaden the mass basis of the *executive* function of power in general and of executive power in the sphere of economic administration in particular. In other words, a course was taken toward the decentralization and democratization of the executive function of power in general, and particularly in the administration of the national economy. In line with this orientation, a system of workers' councils, communes, and various agencies of self-government . . . developed; the system of administrative agencies was abolished and the state administrative apparatus was drastically reduced, and the role of the people's assemblies and people's committees was strengthened.

This does not mean, of course, that we Yugoslav Communists are in favor of the atomization and breaking down of society into isolated, decentralized areas . . . The process which we call decentralization, a name which does not reflect its true nature, does not therefore involve the abolition of centralized functions which are necessary in a contemporary socialist society, but it does lead to their democratization.

Thus the purpose of the whole reorganization has been to ensure, through the transfer of a whole series of executive functions from a single state executive apparatus to numerous agencies of self-government of the working people . . . direct control and direct influence of workers over production and over the implementation of decisions and tasks in all spheres of social life, above all, in the realm of the national economy.

Despite all this, however, it is still clear that the decisive factor in the end is the guiding activity of the conscious forces of socialism, first of all the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the Socialist Alliance of Working People. This activity is essential both in the molding of socialist consciousness and in the struggle for constant socialist progress, in the struggle to overcome static tendencies, distortions due to habit, obsolete views, ideological survivals of the past, inertia, etc., not to mention the struggle against the emergence of antisocialist elements.

The actual power . . . is vested in numerous agencies of popular government of many different types, such as workers' councils, people's committees, councils of people's committees, large committees and councils of self-government which direct institutions and various public services. . . .

Thus the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, which had changed its name in the new circumstances to the League of Communists of Yugoslavia precisely in order to emphasize by this change a new phase in the development of socialist relations and in the social role of Communists, was able to ensure the success of a specific political course only if the Communists concentrated first of all on persuading the broad masses of the working people through organization of the Socialist Alliance of Working People and of the numerous agencies of self-government . . . . The League of Communists of Yugoslavia turned toward the masses on the entire front of socialist construction and social life, in an effort to ensure, first by the method of political activity among the masses and within their organizations, that their representatives in the agencies of popular self-government would adopt socialist decisions . . . . Since the organizations comprising the Socialist Alliance of Working People are not monolithic in the ideological sense—it is united only by a joint and common attachment to socialism—it is clear that various nonsocialist views and opinions break out there. The task of the Communists in this respect is to expose the true nature of such views to the masses and to struggle to eliminate them. It happens only rarely that the activities of the Communists in these cases are not successful . . . .

—"On the Leading Role of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia in the Socialist Structure," by Edvard Kardelj, Vice Chairman of the Federal Executive Council of Yugoslavia, *Pravda*, Moscow, June 2, 1956.

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zation a small but determined minority of the membership, proceeding systematically, can capture control. If this ruling clique also can prohibit the formation of any other group within the organization because it has the backing of the power of the state and, if necessary, can simply have the members of the opposition group arrested, it is obvious that nothing like democracy exists. This is exactly the case with the workers' councils and other so-called self-administering organs in Communist Yugoslavia.

Under present conditions, the system of workers' councils in Yugoslavia is consequently just a camouflage for party dictatorship. And it is probably this very absence of genuine democracy which makes Titoism so attractive to the Soviet leaders.

The Change in Soviet Attitude

STALIN avoided Titoism like the plague. He would never even engage in discussion of the workers' council system, merely dismissing it as a relapse into capitalism. He knew what he was doing, because Titoism has a propaganda advantage over Stalinism and the latter would of necessity come out second best in any debate. The advantage of Titoism derives from the fact that it has been conceived from the standpoint of the worker—a factor of controlling importance for a doctrine like Marxism-Leninism, which purports to be the ideology of the working class. The Stalinist, in having to defend the centralized direction of all enterprise by the government, is from the outset placed in the unfavorable position of having to deny self-determination and to condone the rule of bureaucracy.

In contrast to Stalin, his heirs do not shrink from contact with the Titoist "heresy." Indeed, in the Belgrade Declaration of June 2, 1955, they acknowledged that Titoism was a "concrete form of socialist evolution," implicitly recognizing the Yugoslav system of a market economy with decentralized management of production as a valid alternative to the Soviet system of centralized planning.

Titoism got a further boost at the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party held in Moscow last February. The Congress' downgrading of Stalin meant not only the defamation of his person, but the discrediting of his theory. Certain works written or inspired by Stalin have been expressly repudiated, and others can no longer be quoted or cited without arousing suspicion. Walter Ulbricht, chief of the East German Communist Party, expressed the logical conclusion of this denigration when he declared that "Stalin was indeed no classic exponent of Marxism."

The central core of Stalin's doctrine, the thesis of the all-powerful socialist state with its functions of economic organization and cultural education, has been shaken along with his other pronouncements. The Twentieth Congress formulated the new line of "Back to Lenin!", and every well-trained Communist recalls that on the subject of the state Lenin's views differed widely from Stalin's. Even if Stalin's heirs had the intention of defending his theory of the state, they would find it difficult going today. And in this author's opinion, if they had intended to salvage the central tenet of his doctrine, they would have been more circumspect and less radical in their attack on Stalin.

Is Russia Going Titoist?

IT IS essential to realize that Stalinist ideology was intimately bound up with the institutions of Soviet society created by Stalin; indeed, the ideology served the specific purpose of justifying the institutions. Specifically, Stalin's theory of the socialist state was designed to justify total planning of the economy, the centralized system of government—in short, the dictatorship exercised by the gigantic Soviet bureaucratic machine. Any action undermining the ideology would thus appear to this author to foreshadow changes in the institutions, that is, a structural revamping of the economic and governmental system.

In periods of rapid expansion and the opening up of new territories, as also during an armaments race, a total planned economy such as Stalin's possesses distinct advantages. It makes possible the concentration of all effort upon specific objectives, regardless of cost or profitable operation. But such a system is, by its basic nature, unsuited to satisfy the nation's demand for consumer goods. It is much too cumbersome to adapt itself to demand, and by separating production from distribution it also makes the producers lose all interest in improving the quality of goods or enlarging their assortment. Malenkov's program for boosting the supply of consumer goods within the framework of a total planned economy probably failed for just this reason.

The Malenkov program was an unmistakable sign that there is dissatisfaction among the Soviet people, right up to the highest ranks of the party hierarchy, over the present economy of scarcity, and that the Soviet leaders are under great pressure to do something about it. Nothing suggests that the pressure and dissatisfaction have abated in the recent past.

A market economy, conversely, is far better adapted to satisfy the demand for consumer goods than a totally planned economy. In the past, market economy and private ownership of the means of pro-

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duction were synonymous. Now Tito has come up with a concept of a market economy without private ownership of the means of production, based upon an ideology of revolutionary class struggle. This, much more than any consideration of foreign policy, seems to this author to be the real reason for the Soviet leaders' present interest in Titoism.

The idea that the giant Soviet Union, with its economic and political might, could be learning at the feet of little Yugoslavia might seem grotesque. But it becomes less implausible if stated in the form of a question: What *can* Communists do when they are compelled by external circumstance and internal pressure to "destalinize," to abandon the totally planned centralized economy? The answer is that they must do precisely what Marshal Tito did in 1950.

Today there are a number of concrete indications, some of them already mentioned, of Soviet leanings toward the Titoist economic system. Summing up, these indications are:

1. The fact that the present Soviet leaders exhibit no fear whatever of contact with the dangerous Titoist heresy.
2. The Belgrade Declaration of June 2, 1955.
3. "Destalinization," which embraces the discrediting not only of Stalin's person but also of his doctrine.
4. The gala reception accorded Tito in the Soviet Union in June 1956 and the agreements signed on that occasion for Soviet-Yugoslav cooperation at governmental and party levels.
5. The announcement of partial decentralization of the Soviet economy, to be effected by abolition of some all-Union ministries and transfer of their responsibilities to ministries of the republics. This is exactly how the reform of the Yugoslav economy began in January 1950.

The Titoist system of "socialist market economy" functions in small and backward Yugoslavia much better than the totally planned Stalinist economy did in its time, but it is still far short of satisfactory. Not the least of the reasons for this is the lack of technical and administrative cadres. The latter are in adequate supply in the Soviet Union, and the essential conditions for the functioning of a "socialist market economy" may therefore be better in that country than in Yugoslavia.

In addition, it must be borne in mind that the Soviets may well derive certain propaganda advantages by adopting the Titoist economic system. True, the last few years have proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the Yugoslav Communists are not contemplating to yield power, to abolish the secret police, to grant political rights to other parties, to establish freedom of thought and expression—in short, truly to *democratize* their country. Nevertheless, by instituting a "socialist market economy," by abolishing *total* economic planning, and by restricting the rule of an all-powerful bureaucracy, they at least gave the impression of removing the most hateful features of a Communist society. To the Soviet leaders, burdened by Stalin's legacy and anxious to streamline their system without at the same time yielding an inch of power, the Titoist formula must seem ingenious (and disingenuous) indeed.

The above considerations, then, coupled with the previously outlined moves on the part of Moscow, make plausible the supposition that the Soviet Union may be planning to adopt some of the basic elements of the Titoist system. Certainly this situation, with its vastly important economic and ideological implications, is one which warrants close attention by the rest of the world, both within and without the Soviet orbit.

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Background to Poznan

Editors' Note: One of the favorite Communist pejoratives for trade unions in "capitalist" countries is the term "company union." This term stands for unions which are organized and fully controlled by the management. Yet, as Mr. Grzybowski's article demonstrates, trade unions in Poland are "company unions" par excellence: *completely dominated by the government bureaucracy, they are designed first and foremost as instruments for maintaining and raising labor productivity.*

The plight of workers during the first years of the Communist regime recalls the plight of workers in 19th-century England, described by Karl Marx in the third volume of Das Kapital. *Not unlike the 19th-century capitalists, the Polish government was bent on sheer industrial expansion, and consequently the rights of those who bore its burden were disregarded. Once the cup of misery was full—finally overflowing in the abortive Poznan uprising—the government reversed itself and hastily introduced a number of reforms.*

Unlike capitalism in the West, however, contemporary communism in Poland shows no signs of any profound transformation. The recent reforms, however far-reaching, are cautiously kept within the framework of the existing system. Abuses will be corrected, wages will be raised, working conditions will be improved, but the worker will still not be permitted to assert his independence, or to protect himself against the power of the state apparatus. The limits of the current process of "liberalization" have perhaps been most clearly expressed by Wiktor Klosiewicz, chief of Polish trade unions, who denounced strikes in Poland as "harmful to the interests of the working class and the people." (Trybuna Ludu, August 21, 1956)

The two articles below are offered here as background information essential to an understanding of the tragic events in Poznan. But they also supplement this magazine's continuing reports on labor in Communist countries, all of which highlight the incompatibility between the stated aims of communism—the liberation of labor—and its essentially totalitarian character.

Trade Unions In Communist Poland

By KAZIMIERZ GRZYBOWSKI

THE Polish trade unions, underground during World War II, were rebuilt almost immediately after the war as autonomous bodies, independent of government and political parties, with specific, well-defined tasks in the economic and social life of the country.[1] This was a period when Polish Communists publicly espoused a native "Polish road to socialism," when one of the fundamental articles of their program was that the solution of the economic and social problems of Poland should not be influenced by patterns cut either by the Western democracies or

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[1] The first postwar national congress of the trade unions adopted a resolution (November 18, 1945) which defined the purpose and position of the Central Board of Trade Unions as " . . . a non-party organization, independent of the government or political parties. The Trade Union Central Board has been organized with the object of improving economic and social conditions of Poland and stabilizing their democratic achievements." *Proceedings of the First Congress of the Trade Unions*, Resolution No. 4.

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the Soviet Union.[2] At this time the government was still supported by a broad front of democratic parties, and, in theory at least, the political regime adhered to basic tenets of democracy.

The political balance of power was maintained only until 1948, however. At the December "Unity" Congress the Socialist and Communist Parties were merged, with the Communist Party clearly ascendant. It did not take long for the trade unions to change their nature in accordance with the new political situation. In January 1949, Boleslaw Bierut spelled out the function of a Communist trade union in unequivocal terms: "The Trade Unions are the basic transmission belt from the party to the non-party masses."[3] And 6 months later Vice Premier Aleksander Zawadski spoke to the Second Trade Union Congress as newly elected president of the trade unions. "We can state our position . . . only now . . . ," he said, "when the decisive step in developing our people's democracy into socialism—the Unity Congress and the emergence of the United Workers Party—is an accomplished fact." [4]

The New Order

NEW statutes and a new Trade Union Act totally transformed Polish trade unionism.[5] A hierarchy of various trade union organizations was established, according to the principle of "democratic centralism." Other new legislation eliminated the trade unions' part in the management of government enterprises and industries. The trade unions were further condemned for concerning themselves exclusively with the defense of workers' rights, and they were told that labor-employer antinomy would disappear in the "people's state," where the national economy was managed by the "workers' government." Under these new conditions, the most effective method of promoting workers' interests is to promote production. In the people's state any increase in the workers' share in the national output would necessarily advance his economic, social and cultural interests.[6]

The Polish working class, however, was not to be pacified by dialectical rationalizations. Although the full story of the workers' resistance to the new order may never be written, we know that discontent was widespread. For some time after the congress the highest party circles complained about the resistance of the lower echelons of the trade unions to complete governmental control of planning and management. Indeed the government had to resort to extraordinary measures such as wholesale dismissals or even arrests and purges of the elected trade union officers. Workers responded to the new line by absenteeism and mass departures from their jobs. This in turn caused the government to enact strict labor discipline regulations [7] and a law freezing essential personnel on the job.[8]

A thorough airing of the deeper discontent was delayed until 1955, when an election to trade union bodies was ordered and the election campaign was combined with a soul-searching criticism of managerial and trade union practices. The resolution of the Presidium of the Trade Union Central Council in January [9] and of the IVth Plenary Session of the Council, which followed in mid-February,[10] set the tone for the electoral campaign by outlining some rather serious criticisms of the situation. Local organs dutifully followed suit, and the succeeding campaign was considerably enlivened by a flood of reports and articles pungently reviewing local practices and diagnosing in detail the failures of the system.[11]

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[2] See *Hochfeld Theses for the PPS Congress in Wroclaw* (December 1948).

[3] *Nowe drogi*, Warsaw, January 1949. Subversion of the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.) was a prolonged process. It began with the promotion of Osobka-Morawski, an insignificant member, to the position of leader of the party. Then, while most of the country was still under German occupation, an All-Poland Congress of the P.P.S. met in Lublin (September 1944) and elected a Central Committee composed almost exclusively of Osobka's stooges. Although many of the older leaders joined the ranks of the P.P.S. as the rest of the country was freed of Germans, the leadership of the party remained a faithful ally of the Polish Communists up to 1948. In 1948, however, when the issue of merging with the Communists was raised, the leadership revolted, and its opposition was overcome only after opponents of the merger were purged from the Central Committee of the P.P.S., thus paving the way for the December "Unity" Congress.

[4] *Przeglad zwiazkowy*, Warsaw, 1951, No. 12, p. 499.

[5] *Dziennik Ustaw*, Warsaw (hereinafter cited as *D. U.*), 4/293, 1949.

[6] *Przeglad zwiazkowy*, 1951, No. 12, p. 499 *ff.*

[7] Law of April 19, 1950/*D. U.* 20/168.

[8] Law of March 7, 1950/*D. U.* 10/107.

[9] *Monitor Polski* (Warsaw), A 49/664.

[10] *Przeglad zwiazkowy*, 1955, No. 3, pp. 97–100.

[11] These events were undoubtedly only part of the general change of policy in the Soviet orbit precipitated by the fall of Beria and the revamping of the Soviet MVD. Soviet channels of control in the satellites were reshaped. Radkiewicz, former colonel of the MVD and Minister of Public Security in Poland, was removed. The police was subordinated to the Minister of the Interior, and its powers were circumscribed. This process, which began in mid-1954, was marked by some relaxation of the restrictions against popular criticism of the regime. This, in turn, has resulted in a remarkable outburst of public indignation at Communist practices in various fields of government in Poland.

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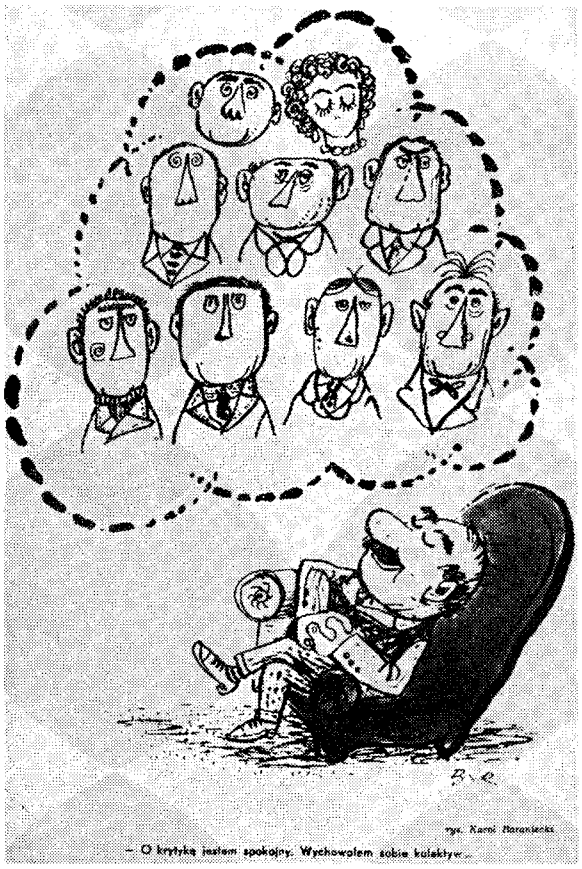

—As for criticism—it doesn't worry me. I have raised myself a collective . . .

From *Szpilki*, Warsaw, May 27, 1956.

Workers vs. Managers

AS far back as in early 1950 a report on the trade union committees' attempts to foster socialist labor competitions complained that "the majority of the [trade union] councils and committees have lost their trade union character and have adopted the techniques of the administrative apparatus." [12] By 1955, it was generally recognized that because bureaucratism was prevalent in all levels of the trade union apparatus, union organizations had almost completely lost contact with and the cooperation of the laboring masses.[13] Although the trade unions adopted the novel policy—for a trade union—of supporting management in its relations with workers, plant managers continued to stress primarily the interests of their enterprises and failed to assume their new duties, which included responsibility for the workers' welfare.

[12] *Przeglad zwiazkowy*, 1950, No. 5, p. 261.

[13] *Ibid.*, No. 3, p. 92.

The relations between workers and factory managers typical of the era initiated in 1949 were shaped, on the one hand, by trade union legislation and, on the other, by various laws and decrees which extended formal managerial control to cover the intimate details of the workers' lives. For example, individual managers at government enterprises were granted broad powers to discipline and reward,[14] and they controlled the purse strings of the social welfare funds, the size of which depended largely on the annual production figures.[15] The seemingly vast powers of the factory managers were more than counterbalanced, however, by controls and regula- from above, of which the financial restrictions were most onerous. In a certain sense they seemed to be almost as victimized by the system as their workers. Party, government and trade union leaders as well as the workers went through the years of the Six-Year Plan as though under military discipline. Every industrial decision was taken in a general atmosphere of military tension, as if the particular situation were a tactical operation justifying all means to obtain victory.

The resolutions of early 1955, as well as most of the reports from the lower echelons, emphasized that the general practice among trade unions has been to ignore criticism and complaints from below, and that most "requests" from the top were actually directives. At the same time, higher trade union organizations backed up the factory managers' orders to lower-level unions, forcing the latter to acquiesce in the factory managers' decisions, no matter how unjust.

Abuses and Malpractices

A REVIEW of overtime pay cases pending with the arbitration boards revealed that highly irregular practices were commonly followed. A critic writing in the magazine issued by the Trade Union Central Board stated:

Cases dealing with overtime pay are chiefly the result of bad planning of overtime work and the lack of funds for that purpose. Very often during a period of intensive production the management encourages workers to work overtime, without issuing a formal order. When it comes to paying, the management, having had no authorization to advance funds for that purpose, denies that it has issued an order to work overtime. . . . [16]

[14] Law of April 19, 1950, *D. U.* 10/107.

[15] Law of February 4, 1950, *D. U.* 6/53 and Decree of February 18, 1955, *D. U.* 9/52.

[16] Jakubowska i Bielecki, "Komisje rozjemcze po roku dzialalnosci," (Auditing Committees After a Year's Activity) *Przeglad zwiazkowy*, 1955, No. 8, p. 345.

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The same critic also revealed that managers often employed manual workers on a white collar job although the enterprise's budget contained no authorization for such a move. This malpractice led to many disputes, because pay and leave were calculated differently for manual workers and white collar employees.[17]

Another type of difficulty resulted from the legislation granting pay and leave privileges to workers in certain industries (*e. g.*, mining and steel) without adequate adjustment of the financial arrangements for the enterprises involved. In 1954, 35 percent of all disputes which came before the arbitration boards belonged in that category. Caught between the limitations of the enterprise budget and the stipulations of a labor law, managers sometimes refused to pay an employee without authorization from the Arbitration Board which would waive the manager's responsibility for financial controls.[18]

Since shortchanging the workers was the only way to ease the financial pressure on the enterprise and thus assure the success of the plan, the managers were keenly interested in the composition of the workers' representation on the arbitration board and the workshop council. An active defender of workers' rights in any of these positions might frustrate all the managers' endeavors to make financial ends meet. Consequently, some factory managers instituted their own localized purges and disciplinary actions, removing in a veritable reign of terror all those who demonstrated a spirit of independence or who might report abuses to the press or radio.[19]

One type of managerial abuse to which the trade unions offered little or no opposition was indiscriminate disciplining of employees on the basis of the law on labor discipline or under the provisions of shop rules. One of the reports summarized the prevailing practice as follows:

Managements of numerous working establishments seem to think that they have unlimited power to impose fines for real or imaginary offenses. Some ground can always be found for imposing a fine, whether in one regulation or another, and if none can be found to apply to a specific case, it does not matter anyway.[20]

The list of minor abuses brought to light in the course of the electoral campaign is practically endless. The state railroads were criticized particularly strongly. They had not issued since 1951 the clothing due their workers as partial pay. Many of their workshops had granted no pay increases for length of service. In one district workshop workers accumulated 17,000 days of unexpended annual leave between 1953 and 1955. There was also an avalanche of complaints concerning pay in kind, training allowances, premiums, service uniforms, pay for sick and emergency leave, and related matters.[21]

A host of criticisms related to managerial misuse of the enterprise funds allocated to improve the workers' standard of living.[22] But the most striking feature of the general situation to emerge is that although the authorities were aware of most of the abuses, appeals even to the higher authorities produced no results.

[17] *Ibid.*

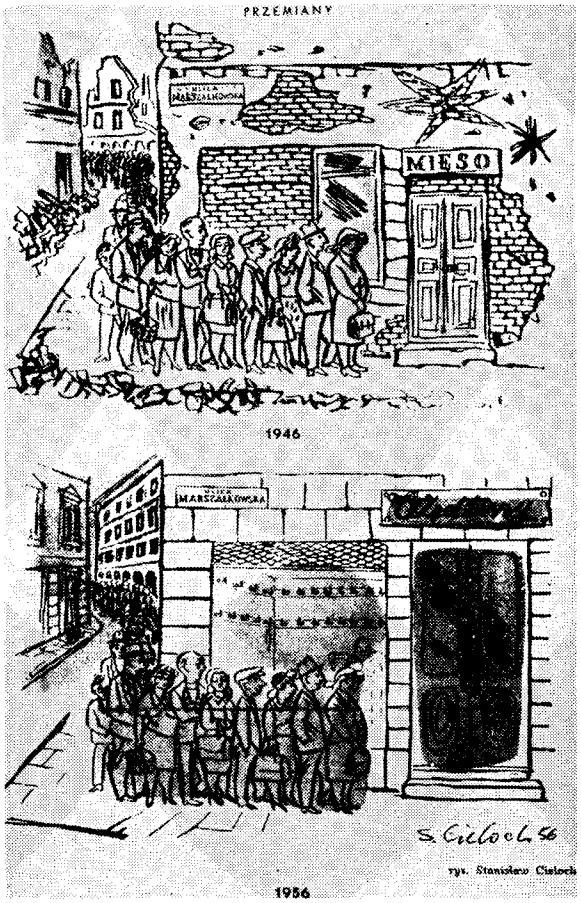
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 346.

[19] Sachnowski, "W walce o umocnienie demokratyzmu" (In the Struggle for the Strengthening of Democracy), *Przeglad zwiazkowy*, 1955, No. 4, p. 149.

[20] *Ibid.*

[21] Grochal, "Opieramy prace naszych instancji o szeroki aktyw spoleczny," (We Base the Work of our Organs on the *Aktivs* of the Masses) *Przeglad zwiazkowy*, 1955, No. 2, pp. 73–75.

[22] Firganek, "Zawieramy umowy zakladowe," (We negotiate Enterprise Agreements), *Przeglad zwiazkowy* 1955, No. 2, pp. 53–57.



CHANGE

Doorsign in upper cartoon: Meat

Doorsign in lower cartoon: Sausage

From *Szpilki*, Warsaw, June 24, 1956.

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The pace of industrial expansion and the low rate of labor productivity under Communist incentives resulted in the fact that Polish labor resources were practically exhausted midway through the Six-Year Plan. The agricultural sector had to get along with a labor force barely able to maintain production. Since almost all of the urban population was immediately drawn into industrial employment, the government had to tap new sources of labor supply. Consequently, the Polish industrial labor force now includes large numbers of women and young people. By 1952, 265 out of every 1,000 industrial workers were under 18, and the percentage of women workers and employees had surpassed 30 percent.[23] For instance, young workers accounted for 70 percent of the working crew in an automobile factory, 65 percent in a truck factory, 55 percent in a cotton combine, and 70 percent of the workers constructing a new smelting plant.

Labor Legislation

UNDER such conditions labor laws regulating the employment of young workers and women are of special importance, and their enforcement a matter of national policy. In this connection, the government took two decisive steps. First, it set the minimum working age at 14 years and provided that workers aged 14 to 16 should combine work with vocational training. Nightwork by persons under 18 was prohibited but the Council of Ministers was given the right to waive this restriction. Women were permitted to work at night and underground in mines.[24] There were restrictions on the employment of women in an advanced stage of pregnancy only. Secondly, the enforcement of labor laws was entrusted to the trade unions.[25] In 1955 it was revealed that the new labor laws were dismal failures, and that the trade unions' supervision was completely inefficacious. An article which appeared at the beginning of 1955 disclosed that not only were workers not given their periodic medical examination but they were being employed on night shifts at jobs dangerous to their health. It was almost universally true that no attention was being paid to their training at work and that it was impossible for them to continue their education. In the Gdansk shipyards young workers shared night shifts with adults. In still another factory, employing 38 workers between 14 and 16 years of age, the time which should have been allotted for training at work was regularly employed in running errands for the foremen.[26]

The severity with which the regime's labor regulations were applied to women was brought out in the resolution of the IVth Plenary Session of the Trade Union Central Board. Court statistics reveal that labor discipline regulations had been indiscriminately applied and that a "not-guilty" verdict was entered in numerous cases involving accusations that regulations regarding the employment of women had been violated.[27]

A New Era?

THE wording of the two resolutions which initiated the electoral campaign forecast a new regime in industrial labor relations. In the campaign itself the faults of the past were charged to the autocratic regime of the Stalinist period, and the highest trade union officials assured the public that the ills would be corrected.[28] And, as noted above, some steps were taken even before the election campaign to ensure enforcement of the regulations on working conditions and, in particular, the employment of youth and women. The steps that were taken recently also make it likely that for a time at least factory managers will be more prudent in their relations with union representatives on the factory level. What is most important, labor discipline has definitely been relaxed.

Otherwise, however, the general set-up has remained unaltered, and in some respects the position of factory managers has been strengthened. While the administration of social insurance was transferred to the trade unions, the method of appropriating funds for this purpose was changed. Expenditures for social insurance were no longer provided for in the national budget but were included in the welfare funds under the economic plan. In the final analysis, this gave the factory managers control of social insurance expenditures,[29] despite the fact that past experience would hardly recommend them as administrators of workers' welfare funds. Also, no change has been made in the organization of the trade unions. "Democratic centralism" and "bureaucratic subordination" remain on the statute book. The primary duty of

[23] Rajkiewicz, "Z zagadnien gospodarki sila robocza," *Zeszyty naukowe szkoly glownej planowania i statystyki* (Warsaw, 1953), p. 173 ff. See also *Nowe Drogi*, 1952, No. 6, p. 25.

[24] Decree of August 2, 1951, *D. U.* 41/322, and Ordinance of April 12, 1953, *D. U.* 21/135.

[25] Law of February 4, 1950, *D. U.* 6/52, 1950.

[26] See editorial, *Przeglad zwiazkowy*, 1955, No. 1, p. 8.

[27] Sachnowski, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

[28] See, *e.g.*, the report of W. Klosiewicz, Chairman of the Central Board of the Trade Union, to the VII Plenary Session of the Central Board, *Trybuna Ludu*, Warsaw, January 14, 1956.

[29] Decree of February 2, 1955, *D. U.* 6/31.

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trade unions remains the promotion of production and the mobilization of workers for the achievement of the production targets set by the plan. These responsibilities and authority have, if anything, been increased by the creation of "comradely courts" to deal with cases involving breaches of labor discipline.[30]

A number of recent statements by Communist officials would seem to suggest that trade unions would now be invested with their traditional role of protecting the workers' interests, rather than—as has been the case in all Communist countries—serving as the handmaiden of the government. However, it is highly questionable whether this function is at all compatible with the functions and mechanism of a totalitarian state of the Soviet type, with its national economic plan focused on the production of capital goods, a large program of investment and a rigid system of technical and financial controls.

In the first place, the cushion of the national market, which adjusts prices and redistributes the cost of labor gains, is absent. In a people's state local and even intermediate economic agencies have no power to make decisions concerning planning and calculating production costs, including wages. In order to give reality to the regime's new and more liberal course, more freedom of action for the trade unions must be matched by larger powers of decision for the managers.[31] The June 1956 uprising in Poznan provided a tragic illustration of the dangers of a half-hearted and imbalanced policy of "liberalization."

In the final analysis, however, the retreat from the theoretical positions of Marxism-Leninism seems to be unavoidable. After the axiom of the identity of the workers and industrial interests was thrown overboard, the Trade Union Central Board passed in June 1956 a resolution requesting the repeal of the 1950 Law on Discipline of Labor.[32] Almost simultaneously, the national convention of Polish economists (June 6–8, 1956) attacked government methods and policies in the management of the national economy. The convention demanded that the government should operate national industries with due regard to the law of supply and demand and channel investment and labor to meet the most urgent needs of the population.[33]

Nevertheless, it is futile to speculate on the final outcome of the ideological tug-of-war taking place in the highest government and party circles in Poland. One can only note that unless the drive to create a heavy industry is relegated to a secondary place, and the needs of the population are assured due priority, the freedom of the trade unions to pursue their goals and discharge their responsibilities will remain a hollow slogan. Moreover, unless there is a real democratization of every aspect of public life in Poland, there exists no institutional barrier to prevent the party and the factory managers from usurping the trade unions' prerogatives.

[30] December 17, 1955, Resolution of the Council of Ministers, *Monitor Polski*, 120/1583.

[31] The Resolution of April 9, 1956, taken jointly by the United Workers Party Central Committee and the Council of Ministers, relaxed somewhat the regulations concerning managerial responsibilities, and gave factory managers wider powers to adjust conditions of work (including wages)—always, however, within the limits set by the economic plans approved on the national level. Some red tape was cut, and excessive centralization of decision-making has been reduced, but rigid enforcement of the economic plans and their technical and financial controls have remained. *Przeglad ustawodawstwa gospodarczego*, Warsaw, May, 1956.

[32] *Trybuna Ludu*, June 10, 1956.

[33] *Ibid.*

Real Wages in Poland—A Footnote

The Polish Six-Year Plan stipulated that by 1955 the real wages of workers in the socialized sector would rise 40 percent over 1949 levels. When, however, Hilary Minc, the chief economics expert of the Communist regime, admitted on December 23, 1955, that during the period of the Six-Year Plan real wages in the socialized sector had risen only between 26 and 27 percent his figures were immediately criticized as "unrealistic," and he was accused of covering up an even more disastrous plan failure. The outcry was so vociferous and the allegations so numerous that the party organ *Trybuna Ludu* felt a rebuttal necessary. On February 3, 1956, a detailed statistical article appeared in its pages, containing the figures shown in the accompanying table:

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I. Total Wages, Average Employment, and Nominal Wages

Year	*1949*	*1950*	*1951*	*1952*	*1953*	*1954*	*1955*
Total wages (in millions of zlotys)..	24, 344	35, 085	42, 233	48, 708	72, 895	80, 436	87, 660
Average employment (in thousands).	4, 354	5, 155	5, 631	5, 893	6, 272	6, 515	6, 784
Average take-home pay (in zlotys)..	447. 29	540. 51	591. 89	644. 01	911. 34	967. 14	1, 009. 94

II. Indices of Nominal Wages, Retail Prices, and Real Earnings

Year	*Nominal Wages*	*Retail Prices*	*Real Wages*
1949	100. 8	100. 0	100. 0
1950	120. 8	107. 6	112. 3
1951	132. 3	117. 8	112. 3
1952	144. 0	134. 9	106. 7
1953	203. 7	192. 4	105. 8
1954	216. 2	180. 5	119. 7
1955	225. 7	176. 7	127. 6

Even these figures cannot be accepted uncritically, however. The most cursory comparison with previous official statements reveals serious discrepancies. Several examples will suffice.

1. *Trybuna Ludu* claims that real wages increased by 12.3 percent during 1950, whereas Hilary Minc stated to the First Plenum of the CC PZPR in February 1951 that the increase was only 6 percent.

2. The index of nominal wages and retail prices given by *Trybuna Ludu* shows that between 1952–53 nominal wages increased by an average of 41.5 percent, and that retail prices rose 42.6 percent. According to these figures, then, between 1952–53 real wages decreased by only a little more than one percent. These figures are, however, completely unreal. The government itself admitted—in its resolution of February 3, 1953—that the average rise of nominal wages amounted to 25 (not 41.5) percent, and retail prices rose by 80 to 100 (not 42.6) percent.

3. *Trybuna Ludu's* statistics for the rise of real wages in 1954 (13.1 percent) and 1955 (6.6 percent) are equally fallacious. Indeed, no less reliable a source than the Polish Main Statistical Office has issued figures showing a rise of only 11 and 6 percent for the same years.

If these and other corrections are taken into account, the true indices of real wages come out as follows:

1949	100. 0
1950	106. 0
1951	106. 0
1952	100. 7
1953	88. 2
1954	97. 9
1955	103. 8

As there is every reason to believe that the data upon which even the corrected index is based are exaggerated to favor the Warsaw regime, and as the corrected index does not take into account the 1953 rise in retail prices, one must inevitably come to the conclusion that the indicated 3.8 percent rise in real earnings is a fiction. During the Six-Year Plan not only was there no improvement in real wages, but on the contrary those wages fell considerably below the 1949 level.

STANISLAW SKRZYPEK

(Mr. Skrzypek is an economist specializing in satellite affairs.)

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Mao's Forced March to Collectivization

By N. P. SMITH

WHILE Communist parties in other parts of the world have been experimenting with more flexible applications of Communist doctrine, the Chinese CP apparently has decided that China needs a more, not less, doctrinaire program—at least in the important area of agricultural policy. During the past year Chinese peasants have been organized into collectives at a fantastic rate; by comparison, Stalin's collectivization drive of the 1930's seems slow and hesitant. The results of this enormous gamble are not yet clear, but the Chinese Communist leaders have committed themselves to the proposition that collectivization in China will not cause the agricultural stagnation it created in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

In the summer of 1955 only 15 percent of China's more than 110 million peasant families were organized in agricultural producers' cooperatives.[1] This is the stage just short of full collectivization: the land is farmed jointly, farm animals and large tools become the property of the cooperative, but peasants are compensated for the land they contribute. Only a few peasants were in "higher, fully socialist" cooperatives, in which the land dividend is abolished and which are in fact identical to the collectives organized in other Communist countries.

In a little less than a year (by June 1956) more than 100 million households, or 90.4 percent of the peasantry, have been pressured into cooperative organizations, 73 million of them, or 61.1 percent, into the "higher" form of collective.[2]

This mammoth drive has followed several years of uneven and often uncertain development. Since 1953 the CCP has made clear that its ultimate goal was the full collectivization of agriculture; but in the official party view the program was to be achieved in stages, "over a relatively long period of time." The result has been a spasmodic, advance-and-halt policy alternating between campaigns for cooperativization and periods of relaxed pressure.[3]

The year preceding the present acceleration drive saw two such policy phases. In the summer of 1954 only 114,000 cooperatives had been organized, embracing about 2 percent of the peasantry.[4] In September 1954, determined that the program should go forward, Premier Chou En-lai announced to the first session of the National People's Congress that 50 percent of the peasants could be organized into cooperatives by the end of the first Five-Year Plan, 1957.[5] An immediate goal of 600,000 cooperatives was decided upon in October; by February 1955 670,000 were alleged to be in existence.[6] Almost all of these were the lower form of cooperative. At the time the party said little about the transition to full collectivization; what few full collectives were in operation were mainly for experimental purposes.

The spring of 1955 brought a reverse trend. Poor harvests and the state's mismanagement of food distribution had resulted in a serious shortage of grain. The peasants balked, rural cadres lost confidence, and the cooperativization program braked to a halt. A vice-premier of the Peiping regime later reported that ". . . tension prevailed in the rural areas in the spring of this year. . . . in some regions the bark was slashed from trees, hogs were slaughtered, and grain was grabbed."[7] Contraction became the policy: by summer 1955 the number of cooperatives had been reduced to 650,000.[8] The new emphasis on restraint was affirmed by the State Council and justified by newspapers throughout the

[1] Speech delivered July 31, 1955 by Mao Tse-tung, published under title *Kuan-yu nung-yeh ho-tso-she-hua wen-t'i* (Questions of Agricultural Cooperativization) by *Jen-min Ch'u-pan She*, Peiping, October 1955, p. 5. (An English translation was issued as a supplement to *People's China*, November 1, 1955.)

[2] Speech by Teng Tzu-hui at the third session of the first National People's Congress. New China News Agency (hereafter cited as NCNA), June 19, 1956.

[3] For a detailed treatment of the early phases of Chinese Communist agricultural policy and collectivization (1949–54), see Richard L. Walker, "Collectivization in China: A Story of Betrayal," *Problems of Communism*, No. 1 (January–February), 1955.

[4] Statistical Report for 1954, issued by the State Statistical Bureau, Peiping, September 21, 1956.

[5] NCNA, September 25, 1954.

[6] Mao's July 1955 speech, p. 5.

[7] Speech by Li Hsien-nien, reported in *Ta Kung Pao*, Tientsin, November 8, 1955.

[8] Mao's July 1955 speech, p. 5.

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country.[9] At a special March conference the party approved a reduction of the 1957 cooperativization target from 50 percent of the peasantry to 33 percent; although some party leaders voiced opposition to the slowdown, the new target was approved by the second session of the People's Congress, which closed on July 30.[10]

The Great Push

ON the very next day, in a dramatic about-face, Chairman Mao Tse-tung personally issued the call for the latest and far more drastic speed-up of collectivization. In a speech before a special meeting of party secretaries, Mao suggested a target of 1,300,000 cooperatives for the end of 1956 and called for "basic completion" (around 80 percent) of the cooperativization drive by 1960.[11] At Mao's bidding, party members hurried to the countryside to "study" rural conditions for two months; in a follow-up move, a party Central Committee plenum in early October approved Mao's 1956 goal and moved the date for basic completion of the cooperative drive up to 1958.[12]

From late 1955 through early 1956 cooperatives were established at a breakneck rate; equally important, a new policy of immediate transition to full collectives was initiated. Mao in his July speech paid lip service to the party's step-by-step approach, long praised as China's distinctive contribution to Communist collectivization practice.[13] But during the fall the party leaders, in a mood of premature confidence over the success of the drive, quietly set this idea aside; millions of peasants were pushed to make the transition from individual farming to full collectives within a few months or even a few weeks. By December, more than 60 percent of the peasants (70 million households) had entered cooperatives; by March, 90 percent were in cooperatives and 55 percent were members of full collectives.[14] Since then the figures have increased only slightly (90.4 percent by June), and in recent months there have been definite signs of another let-up of pressure, as party leaders have belatedly admitted a number of difficulties and shortcomings encountered. That this let-up is only temporary, however, is indicated by a party statement in June that agriculture "in the overwhelming majority of provinces" is to be collectivized—not just organized into cooperatives, but collectivized—by the spring of 1957.[15]

The vacillating party line prior to Mao's speech and the tenor of the speech itself reflected an extensive dispute within the party over the proper pace of collectivization, an issue which probably was not settled until Mao himself intervened. Typical of the line of criticism voiced against rapid collectivization was the following statement:

> It is impossible to expect peasants, who only yesterday were small private owners, to change right away. We might recall the situation in the spring of 1953. At that time, impatience to reach a big target produced an unfavorable effect on production. . . . It is still not possible to carry out a fundamental revolution in the reform of production technique within a short period. Within a considerable period of time, the production of agricultural producer's cooperatives in general will still not be stepped up to a great extent. . . . It is therefore impossible to change the peasants' view of private land ownership and [their] psychology of relying on land. . . . It is still impossible to expect them to regard labor as the main guarantee of livelihood and to give up the land dividend completely.[16]

In his July speech, Mao branded such views as a deviation of "rightist conservatives" within the party, adding that "some of our comrades are tottering along like a woman with bound feet, always complaining that others are going too fast."[17] This cryptic warning apparently served its purpose, for after the speech the critics of rapid collectivization became silent.

New Class Struggle—For State Profit

IN spelling out explicit reasons for the dramatic reversal toward immediate acceleration, Chairman Mao put primary emphasis on political issues, which he couched in doctrinal jargon. He declared:

> During the last few years everyone has noticed that the spontaneous tendency in the countryside to develop towards capitalism is daily gaining strength. New rich peasants are springing up everywhere. Many well-to-do middle peasants are striving to become rich ones.[18]

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[9] *E. g.*, *Chekiang Jih Pao*, May 4, 1955.

[10] *Fa-Chan kuo-min ching-chi ti ti-i-ke wu-nien chi-hua, 1953–1957* (The First Five-year Plan for the Development of the National Economy) *Jen-min Ch'u-pan She*, Peiping, 1955, p. 82.

[11] Mao's July 1955 speech, pp. 6–7.

[12] Plenum decision, supplement to *People's China*, December 1, 1955, p. 13.

[13] Prior to the present drive, the Communists preached the practice of allowing the peasants one year or more in mutual aid teams, an introductory form of cooperative activity, and in the agricultural producers' cooperatives; this was to give the party cadres time to make the new organizations function and to prepare the peasants for full collectives.

[14] Data for December given in preface by Mao Tse-tung to "The Surging Tide of Socialism in the Countryside," *People's China*, February 16, 1956, p. 4; data for March from Peiping *Jen-min Jih-pao* editorial, May 1, 1956.

[15] Teng Tzu-hui, June 1956 speech, NCNA, June 19, 1956.

[16] *Cheng-chih Hsueh-hsi* (Political Study), October 13, 1955. (This article must have been written and approved before Mao's July speech had taken effect on the party.)

[17] Mao's July 1955 speech, p. 1.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 31.

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Mao went on to assert that party members were underestimating the danger of this situation—that, furthermore, if the party did not move forward, it would surely slip backward. He called on the party to stimulate a new class struggle: not Marx's class struggle between workers and capitalists, nor Mao's old class struggle between working peasants and idle landlords, but an artificially provoked struggle between working peasants with one or two acres of land and those with four or five. He estimated that 60 to 70 percent of the peasants had so little property that they could be persuaded that they would be better off in collectives, since in collectives they would share the fruits of their neighbors' property.

Mao also gave economic reasons for the acceleration:

> . . . as everyone knows, the amount of marketable grain and industrial raw materials produced in our country today is very low, while the state's demands for these items grow year by year. Therein lies a sharp contradiction.[19]

Mao certainly realized that this contradiction had led to recurrent agricultural crises in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. In China the immense and rapidly growing peasantry must eat the greater part of the food it produces, leaving only a small surplus for investment in capital goods. Mao also knew that Peiping was committed to ship considerable quantities of grain to the USSR and the satellites.

As the Communists see it, the conclusion is simple. The peasants' share must be reduced to the barest margin needed to keep him working, and the state's share must be increased to the utmost. The role of collectives was made eminently clear in a statement by a Chinese Communist writer last December:

> Collectives are . . . capable of supplying more mercantile grain which is specially needed by our country in carrying out socialist industrialization. According to certain representative investigations, the percentage of mercantile grain available from the individual small peasant economy is less than 15 percent, but that from the agricultural producers' cooperative is 30 percent.[20]

The individual peasant can withhold part of his crop and feed his family slightly more than the minimum, and it is difficult for the state to stop him. But in cooperatives and collectives every bag of grain is checked by accountants, managers, and committees, and the state's share can be assured.

Peasant Reaction

WHEN Mao spoke, Peiping already knew that the 1955 harvest would be good. Poor harvests in 1953 and 1954 had been one cause of the slowdown in early 1955; the prospect of relative plenty in the fall was certainly a major reason behind the decision to speed up. The party apparently felt that the peasants, slightly better off than they had been for several years, could be expected to show less opposition.

Just how much resistance was actually encountered during the campaign is impossible to determine from outside China. Throughout the winter and spring the Communist press, as might be expected, was full of extravagant propaganda citing the enthusiastic response of the peasants, describing how they eagerly joined the cooperatives and then demanded that the cooperatives be transformed into collectives. The regime claimed it was not using coercive force in the campaign, relying rather on its network of rural cadres and party activists to implement the program through persuasion. Yet, in a recent report Teng Tzu-hui, Vice-Premier and Director of the party Central Committee's rural work department, belatedly admitted there had been departures from the principles of "voluntariness," a lack of "democracy," and "some serious subjectivism and ordering about" in the course of the drive.[21] There have been official complaints that the peasants were slaughtering farm animals and of an intensified campaign against rural "counterrevolutionaries."

Peasants faced with collectivization cannot destroy their land, but they can sell their farm animals or, in a gesture of defiance, kill them. This happened in Soviet Russia, and it has been happening again in China. The Tientsin *Ta Kung Pao* admitted on December 21 that this had already become "a serious situation in certain rural areas today . . ."; and on December 30 a State Council directive was issued in the hope of maintaining cattle prices and "preventing indiscriminate slaughter." In March 1956 the State Council reported that the 1955 livestock target had not been met.[22]

The Chinese press also has carried reports of "counterrevolutionary activity" in rural areas. In polemical exhortations against such activity, Communist writers have admitted that the "class struggle is extremely acute" during collectivization.[23] One paper wrote last winter:

> Since the exploiting class will not allow itself to be eliminated without resistance, the sabotage activities of counterrevolutionaries will increase every day and center around the cooperativization movement as it gathers greater momentum. The increasing number of cases of counterrevolutionaries sabotaging the movement in many *hsien* is ample proof of this point. . . . For instance, there occurred

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[20] *Hsueh-hsi* (Study), December 2, 1955.
[21] Teng Tzui-hui, June 1956 speech, NCNA, June 19, 1956.
[22] NCNA, March 31, 1955.
[23] *Hsueh-hsi*, April 2, 1956.

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last autumn more cases of sabotage in Liaoning province than in the corresponding period of the previous year. The situation must be similar in other provinces.[24]

A Theory of Productivity

WHATEVER the measure of peasant resistance, it is only one of the problems which has confronted the party. It is, in one sense, merely a complicating factor in the regime's more basic problem of raising China's agricultural productivity. In the early months of the present campaign, party planners and theorists spoke out boldly and frequently of the enormous increases in agricultural production which they supposed would result from collectivization. A remarkable document, the "Draft National Program for Agricultural Development, 1956–1967" gave official form to this optimistic view.[25] The Chinese Communists generally have been too cautious to set up long-range targets for other sectors of the economy, but in this 12-year program for agriculture they committed themselves to specific figures for increases of productivity in each major agricultural region. According to the plan, the average annual production of grain per hectare is to be more than doubled within 12 years, involving an increase of at least 7 percent a year—10 percent for some provinces. As one Communist writer admitted, no other country has managed an average increase in land productivity of more than 4 percent per year.[26]

How does Peiping expect to do it? The Communists think they have a simple solution: there are in the Chinese countryside vast amounts of underemployed labor; the people must work harder, and the collective is a means to organize their work and make sure it is done. The twelve-year program stipulates the number of days which men and women in the countryside must work each year.[27] Irrigation facilities and fertilizer may be inadequate, but, as a Communist writer explained, the party expects that ". . . labor power will make water and manure available; thus, generally speaking, the amount of increase in grain output is determined by the labor put in."[28]

The burden is placed on the peasants because the state had not planned to spend much money in the countryside. The Chinese Communists are ideologically and economically committed to a program which lays primary stress on the development of heavy industry; this, they say ". . . is a matter of course and may be explained by the objective demands of the laws of economic progress."[29] The version of the first Five-Year Plan approved last year thus allotted only 8 percent of state investment to agriculture.[30]

Whether sheer labor power can effect a substantial rise in productivity is highly doubful. The Chinese peasant, after many thousand years of intensive farming, has become a relatively efficient farmer, considering the tools, seeds and fertilizer available. Improvements in seeds and farming techniques could raise the yield somewhat at low cost, but really large increases in productivity would require more fertilizer, better tools and more irrigation facilities. The Communists have claimed that many wells and other small-scale irrigation projects have been constructed by the peasants since collectivization, and this may be true. But large irrigation works require large amounts of capital; so do fertilizer plants and farm equipment factories.

That the Communists themselves are experiencing some belated doubts on the feasibility of this labor productivity theory has been indicated in recent months. While their basic emphasis on heavy industry has not changed, they have found it necessary to put more funds back into the countryside. It was discovered that many cooperatives lacked working capital, and there was friction because the poorer

[24] *Cheng-chih Hsueh-hsi*, January 13, 1956.

[25] This program was submitted to the Supreme State Council on January 23, 1956. Text published in *People's China*, February 16, 1956.

[26] *Chung-kuo Ching-nien* (Chinese Youth), February 16, 1956.

[27] *People's China*, February 16, 1956, pp. 13–14.

[28] *Chung-kuo Ching-nien*, *op. cit.*

[29] *Ching-chi Yen-chiu*, (Economic Research), February 17, 1956.

[30] First Five-year Plan, p. 82.

OPPOSITION OR TREASON?

Our achievements are not welcomed by all those who are dissatisfied with socialism, particularly counterrevolutionaries who have infiltrated into our industrial and mining plants, enterprises, government organs and rural areas. . . . They started last year spreading rumors to undermine our efforts to effect Socialist transformation of agriculture. . . . They instigated backward elements to obstruct peasants and herdsmen from actively taking the path to Socialism. . . . They have also managed to usurp the leadership positions in farm cooperatives. . . . They have spread rumors to intimidate the masses and prevent them from participating in farm cooperatives. . . . In order to safeguard the smooth progress of Socialist construction . . . we must make unceasing efforts to intensify our struggle until all counterrevolutionary and other undesirable elements are cleaned up.

Sinkiang Jih Pao,
Urumchi, May 26, 1956.

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peasants did not have enough cash to pay for their shares in the common property. The state has doubled the 1956 quota for agricultural loans, although at the same time it has ordered that the system of credit cooperatives be expanded in order to absorb as much capital as possible from the villagers themselves.[31] The party has also announced its intention to spend more money on agricultural means of production, and on goods for peasants to buy.[32] But Peiping does not seem willing to scale down the targets for industrial expansion; the new concessions to agriculture still appear insufficient, and certainly not enough to bring about the increases in productivity which Peiping claims to expect.

Administrative Muddle

MANY other problems remain. Most of the new collectives seem to be very slapdash affairs, and the pressing need is to get them working properly. "Model Regulations for an Agricultural Producers' Cooperative," published in November 1955 and approved on March 17 of this year, call for a complicated system of committees, managers, and production plans in each unit.[33] Collective funds must be set aside for various purposes, and members are paid according to a Soviet-style reckoning of work-norms and labor-days. This requires a capable staff, and Communist officials have shown concern over the lack of qualified personnel, particularly the shortage of accountants. New staff is being trained, but it will be a long time before it can function efficiently. Chinese agriculture has been put through a rapid reorganization as drastic in its implications as the formation of a completely new army from a mass of peasants on the eve of battle. Even if the recruits were willing and the sergeants capable, the muddle would be monumental.

As a result, "the greater part of the agricultural producers' cooperatives have not worked out labor planning, and what labor planning has been worked out is crude and not comprehensive in many cases." [34] In a March 27, 1956, directive on spring sowing the State Council declared:

> The agricultural cooperation movement has developed with such rapidity and on such a grand scale that a number of agricultural producers' cooperatives have not gained enough time to deal properly with such problems as transfer of means of production to the cooperatives, organization of labor, and the drawing up of production plans after their establishment or changeover to higher cooperatives. Besides, a number of cooperatives are characterized by idleness of labor, confusion, unclear division of responsibility, excessive expenses of a nonproductive character, and waste. Failure to solve these questions will certainly produce an unfavorable effect on production.[35]

That some such "unfavorable effects" have already been "produced" was admitted by Teng Tzu-hui in his aforementioned report to the June 1956 session of the People's Congress. Teng reported that in some collectives "falling output in economic crops and subsidiary occupations have greatly affected their total income and particularly their cash income, and have increased the difficulties in the daily life of their members." [36]

A New Note of Caution

Throughout Teng's speech there were indications that the number and complexity of the problems which have arisen have had a somewhat sobering effect on the early enthusiasm and confidence expressed by party leaders. Among other shortcomings he admitted that many principles which the Communists claim to consider important had often been forgotten in the course of the acceleration drive:

> Some cooperatives . . . failed to apply strictly the principles of voluntariness and mutual benefit. . . . Some cooperatives have failed to show enough concern and care for orphans, widows, and the aged, weak, and disabled. . . . Some cooperatives have fixed rather low prices for livestock, farm tools, woods, fruit trees and water conservation facilities placed under common ownership. . . . Some cooperatives have not based their productive plans on concrete circumstances and so have inappropriately raised their targets for increased output.

Teng went so far as to hint that the pace of the present drive might have been too fast. In usual Communist fashion, however, responsibility was placed not on the policy itself but on its implementation by the lower level party cadres; failures, he said, were caused by

> . . . the onesidedness and subjectivity of personnel at the lower levels and by their undue emphasis on quantity and speed; [the latter] were chiefly due to overexpanded plans of the departments concerned at upper levels and their hastiness.

In this critique of his own program, Teng Tzu-hui even inferred that he was afraid the state was getting too large a share of the crop. As he put it:

> The current pressing task is to solve the problem of distributing the income and profits of the cooperatives. That is, to solve correctly the problem of the relationship between the state, the cooperatives, and the individual cooperative members.

The proposition implicit in this statement must be

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[31] *Chung-kuo Chin-yung* (Chinese Monetary Affairs), February 22, 1956.

[32] Speech by Vice-Premier Li Fu-chun at 1956 session of the National People's Congress, NCNA, June 18, 1956.

[33] Published as supplement to *People's China*, April 1, 1956.

[34] Editorial in *Jen-min Jih-pao*, March 12, 1956.

[35] NCNA, March 31, 1956.

[36] NCNA, June 19, 1956.

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difficult for the party to accept: to wit, if the state's share of profits is increased too rapidly, the initiative of the collective farmer suffers. It would seem that the party is reluctantly admitting that the peasants are not as enthusiastic as the Communists expected them to be.

The party's trend toward greater caution has been reflected in the slackening off of the collectivization drive since March. On March 9, an editorial in the Peiping *Jen-min Jih-pao* declared that efficient production was more important than further expansion of cooperatives and collectives. The State Council confirmed this line on March 27, when it ordered that ". . . cooperatives that are not expanded, amalgamated or changed over to higher cooperatives should remain unchanged pending completion of spring sowing." [37] In another editorial on June 20, *Jen-min Jih-pao* reminded its readers that rashness in the collectivization program could be as harmful as conservatism.

These developments could possibly portend another slow-down of the collectivization schedule. It is much more likely, however, that the present period of consolidation is temporary and will be ended within a few months unless the 1956 harvest is unexpectedly bad. The Communists will probably renew the campaign this fall and drive on toward their announced goal, virtual completion of collectivization during 1957.

But meeting a target for collectives does not mean that the gamble has been won. The collectives must be made to work fairly efficiently, and the effects on agricultural production must be determined. Two important questions are still unanswered: Will Chinese agriculture be given the equipment and fertilizer it needs? What will be the long-run effect of collectivization on the peasants' willingness to produce? This summer, one year after the fateful summer of 1955, Peiping has had to modify its approach toward both these problems, and the leaders of the party's rapid collectivization faction may well be regretting their confident statements of last January and February. Their only consolation is that Mao Tse-tung is out on the same limb with them.

[37] NCNA, March 31, 1956.

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The Evolution of Soviet Family Policy

By WILLIAM PETERSEN

IN any society the family has three main functions: to perpetuate the population, to maintain cultural continuity from one generation to the next, and to determine the place of each newborn infant in the social structure. In static societies these three functions are in balance, but in one undergoing rapid change there is a tendency toward imbalance that subjects the family to constant strain.

In totalitarian societies particularly conflicting pressures heighten the stresses upon the family. On the one hand, the totalitarian state always attempts to validate its existence by denying the legitimacy of the society it has supplanted and it cannot tolerate the strong emotional bond between the old and the new inherent in the father-son relationship. Nor can such a regime accept the principle that the son shall inherit, even temporarily, the father's place in society, for a fundamental characteristic of totalitarianism is that each person's status is determined solely by his relation to the ruling power. These pressures are reflected in various decrees and in institutions like the Nazis' *Hitler jugend* (Hitler Youth), the avowed purpose of which is to break down the family and weaken its influence.

On the other hand, a totalitarian regime finds the family something of a necessary evil, for its expansionist aims demand a rapidly growing population. This opposite pressure is reflected in other decrees strengthening the family and granting state subsidies to encourage families of large size and in slogans like the Nazis' "*Kinder Kirche Küche*" (Children Church Kitchen). The only way out of this contradiction would lie in devising some alternative institution to take over the functions of the family, but all attempts to do this have failed.

In the Soviet Union, the state party has responded to this characteristic dilemma of totalitarianism by a gradual shift of emphasis in its family policy. During the period from the 1917 Revolution to the first Five-Year Plan, the major stress was placed on breaking down inter-generational continuity in order to attract more young people away from their conservative parents to the revolutionary party. From the early 1930's on, however, the regime began once more to encourage continuity between father and son, since by this time, some of the post-revolutionary generation could be counted upon to support the party's rule. The return to a stronger family, moreover, was necessary as a way of replacing the millions who died as victims of the forcible collectivization of agriculture and, later, as casualties of the war of 1941–45. Thus, in broad terms, the Soviet regime shifted from a family policy calculated to help establish its rule within Russia to one designed to furnish the larger population requisite to a strong internal economy and, especially, an effective foreign policy.

Down With the Family

DURING the first 15 years or so of Soviet rule, the two full family codes plus a number of separate decrees gradually developed a generally consistent and complete family policy.[1] All legal inequalities between the sexes were abolished. Not only bigamy and adultery, but even incest, were dropped from the statutory list of crimes. Religious marriage was no longer recognized by law, and there seems to have been an official effort to reduce even the civil registration of marriages to a formality of no importance. *De facto* marriages were recognized as legally equivalent to those consummated by civil ceremony, and such "nonregistered marriages" numbered perhaps a quarter of a million by 1936, when the law was changed. Divorce could be had simply

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[1] The codes were dated October 17, 1918, and November 19, 1926. Both are translated in Rudolf Schlesinger, *Changing Attitudes in Soviet Russia; The Family in the USSR*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1949.

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and cheaply at the wish of either partner, and at least among the small minority directly influenced by the party line it was frequent.

That the early decrees were predominantly negative reflects their principal purpose: to hasten the disintegration of the patriarchal family of Tsarist Russia. In Bukharin's words, "this formidable stronghold of all the turpitudes of the old regime" was the most pervasive and therefore, perhaps, the most powerful brake on the forward course of the revolution; it had to be removed. Political expediency guided the Soviet family policy of this period more than the abstract dogma of Engels' *Origin of the Family*, Bebel's *Woman and Socialism*, and other Marxist classics.

While the party actively sought to weaken family ties, it was not much concerned with sexuality. The party line, insofar as there was one, was to avoid extremes: as Lenin put it, "neither monk nor Don Juan." Though he added also an admonition against "the intermediate attitude of the German philistine," this was perhaps the closest Western analog to the ethical norm of the leading Bolsheviks.[2] Devoted to their party duties, they typically led respectable personal lives and censured, with something like puritanical fervor, the occasional Lunacharsky who amused himself with a ballerina.[3] But in party circles formal social curbs on sexuality were lax.

Not so, however, the controls on reproduction. In spite of the assiduously propagated legend to the contrary, the right of parents to decide for themselves on the spacing and number of their children was never established as a Soviet norm. Opinion on the matter within the party was divided, and policy therefore ambivalent, but in the dominant official view:

> . . . birth control [was] . . . a bourgeois panacea for social ills, which could have no place in a socialist society. [The Communists] interpreted the question from the point of view of a conscious limitation of the race rather than of permitting women to choose for themselves whether they wished to give birth to an endless succession of children.[4]

Such Soviet officials as advocated legal access to contraceptives did so not because they favored neo-Malthusianism *per se*, but rather because they considered the inevitable alternative under the prevailing conditions of Soviet life—an increase in abortions—the greater evil.[5] In any case, contraceptives were not generally available, even in the cities. By official regulation, what meager supplies there were had to be held at the state-run medical clinics, to be called for on each occasion when they were needed.[6] With the physical scarcity compounded by such bureaucractic controls, one can well believe that "widespread prejudice" developed against the use of contraceptives.[7]

Abortion, consequently, was the more common mode of limiting family size, even though toward this the official state policy was unambiguously hostile. Abortions were legalized only in order to facilitate their rigid control. A woman desiring an operation was required to go before an official committee, which tried to convince her that it was her duty to society to give birth to her child. In cases of first pregnancy, requests were denied except when supported by urgent medical considerations. In cases other than first pregnancies, as indicated by the 1927 statistics for Moscow, 40.8 percent of the authorized abortions were for medical reasons, 57.1 percent for economic reasons, and only 2.1 percent on all other grounds.[8] Such "frivolous" pleas as, for instance, the unmarried status of the mother or the parents' belief in a planned family were not acceptable.[9]

If an applicant was reluctant to accept a negative committee decision, some doctors made it a practice

[2] Klara Zetkin, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Modern Books, London, 1929; cited in Schlesinger, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

[3] Although the party line on sex was generally middle-of-the-road, there were both left and right deviations. On the left, Alexandra Kollentay was the principal advocate of a free, "glass of water" sex life. She usually presented her atypical views in the relatively safe form of fiction. In her *Love of Three Generations*, for example, she had the heroine, Shenya, declare: "I change my lovers according to my mood. At the moment I am pregnant, but I do not know who my child's father is, and moreover I do not care." On the extreme right, on the other hand, Professor Zalkind of Sverdlov University championed a rigid sex code which called for absolute premarital continence and condemned birth control and abortion. "Sex must be entirely subservient to class," he declared, and "the purely eugenic question of the revolutionary Communist cleansing of humanity through posterity must be the only consideration in the choice of the beloved." See Jessica Smith, *Woman in Soviet Russia*, Vanguard, New York, 1928, pp. 129–131.

[4] Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

[5] See, for example, the comments of D. I. Yefimov, People's Commissar of Health in the Ukrainian Soviet Republic, and Professor K. Bogeihopov, of Leningrad University, quoted in Schlesinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 183, 259.

[6] Alice W. Field, *Protection of Women and Children in Soviet Russia*, Dutton, New York, 1932, p. 98.

[7] Maurice Hindus, "The Family in Russia," in *The Family, Its Function and Destiny* (ed. by Ruth Nanda Anshen), Harper, New York, 1949, p. 113.

[8] Field, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

[9] Discussing the abrogation of the decree permitting abortions (which took place in 1936, not 1946 as he says), Hindus remarks that thereafter "physicians had to steel themselves against the cries of despair of unmarried girls, who threatened suicide if they had to go through with childbirth." *Op. cit.*, pp. 119–20. The implication that the new decree changed policy in this respect has no factual basis.

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to require her to watch other women undergoing the operation. Since abortions were performed without anesthetic, this was a sight that usually produced a sudden awareness of her social duty.[10] According to the director of the abortion department of the Moscow Institute for the Protection of Mothers and Infants, the Soviet Union was "the country in which abortion is least practiced."[11] Under such a system it is easy to see why.

Wanted: A Substitute

IN the early years of the Soviet state, then, there was a conscious effort to break down the family structure by various legal means—elimination of the differentiation in law between legitimate and illegitimate births, removal of adultery and incest from the category of crime, and judicial indifference to whether the support of a child born out of wedlock was charged to the biological father or to some other man (especially when the latter happened to have more money). At the same time, the state was concerned that the current generation should more than reproduce itself, and it therefore restricted abortions and controlled the use of contraceptives.

But these parallel efforts to de-emphasize the traditional family and yet assure a high birth rate posed the problem of how the physical care and socialist upbringing of children were to be accomplished. During the following transitional phase in the evolution of Soviet family policy, tentative and partly contradictory steps were taken to resolve this dilemma—on the one hand, toward reviving the family but remolding it in accord with socialist concepts; on the other, toward evolving alternative institutions to take over the family's functions in rearing the young.

As a step toward a new family concept attuned to Soviet ideals, an attempt was made in party circles during the middle 1920's to develop "socialist" marriage and other family ceremonies, described by one author in these words:

> The bride and groom sit on a red-draped platform, attended by fellow union members and representatives of the women's organization. The head of the factory committee is master of ceremonies. The pair pledge themselves to work mutually to raise the production of the factory, and suitable speeches are made, followed by an entertainment or refreshments. This ceremony is followed in due course of time by the Octobrina, in place of the old christening. . . . The child is dedicated to the Soviet state, and instead of being named for one of the saints is christened "Lentrozina" for Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev, or "Era" if it is a girl; or "Ram" for Revolution, Electrification and Moscow, "October Twenty-fifth," or some other appropriate name, if it is a boy.[12]

How effective such secular ceremonies might have become in developing a new family concept is difficult to say. No ritual is effective as a means of social control until after a certain tradition has been established, and before this could happen in this case the regime's policy had changed.

While these new ceremonies were evolving the regime also began to establish state-run creches and kindergartens as substitutes for the parents in caring for children. Lenin had described such institutions as "the simple, every-day means, involving nothing pompous, grandiloquent or ceremonial, which can in actual fact emancipate women and abolish their inequality with men as regards their role in social production and public life."[13] Progress in translating this vision into actuality, however, was slow. Even in Moscow, the showplace of the nation, less than ten percent of all infants were being cared for in the creches as late as 1931, and the standards of these makeshift institutions were no more adequate then their number.[14]

For the 2 million waifs left by the war of 1914–18 and the subsequent civil war, Communist orphanages provided a further substitute for the family, enabling the state to instil in them the proper deference to the party. Conservative family influences were also combatted through the youth adjuncts of the party and, more broadly, through the newly established schools, which the regime set up as political training grounds for the new generation. "The school apart from life, apart from politics," said Lenin, "is a lie."

The party did not stop at trying to curb the family's influence on the child; it sought to use the child to influence his parents. This to make the malleable youngster the party's advocate in the home hardly was conducive to harmonious, tightly knit family relations. One sympathetic observer of the period wrote:

> The way in which children, especially the Pioneers, are urged to educate their parents, to persuade them to learn to read and write,

[10] Field, *op. cit.*, pp. 91–2.

[11] Fannina W. Halle, *Women in Soviet Russia*, Viking, New York, 1933, p. 144.

[12] Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 93–94. Cf. Ella Winter, *Red Virtue: Human Relationships in the New Russia*, Harcourt Brace, New York, 1933, p. 152: "An amusing illustration of changing conditions in the USSR is the child whose parents enthusiastically named him Lentrozin for Lenin, Trotsky and Zinoviev. . . . Only the first syllable of the boy's name is good communism now."

[13] V. I. Lenin, "A Great Beginning" (1919), quoted in A. Krasnopolsky and G. Sverdlov, *The Rights of Mother and Child in the USSR*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1953, p. 39.

[14] Field, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

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clean their teeth, and give up going to church, is not always pleasant and is very prejudicial to family life.[15]

All of these early attempts to transform marriage and the family, however, were more important as indications of the orientation of Soviet policy than for their immediate effect. In a country torn by war and revolution, civil strife and famine, the decrees of far-off Moscow were barely heard in the hamlets, and certainly not rigidly enforced. Even before the revolution the old family structure of Tsarist Russia was already beginning to disintegrate under the impact of the pre-1914 industrialization; the process was hastened by the war and often completed by the civil war, when it was fought, so to speak, within the family. The low level of the economy and particularly the miserably inadequate housing were far stronger as disintegrative influences than any official decree. Still, the party's efforts to reshape family life would undoubtedly have had profound effects in the long run, had it not been for an intervening shift in policy.

The Family Revitalized

THE shift which began in the mid-1930's, was toward tightening rather than weakening family bonds. In order to stimulate marriages, the stigma was removed from romantic love of the old-fashioned Western bourgeois variety. Whereas the heroine of a 1930 Soviet novel would win her husband by fulfilling her factory production norm, a few years later her successor was showing less concern with abstract 5-year plans and more with her own personal appearance. Wrote *Pravda* in the new vein:

> We endorse beauty, smart clothes, chic coiffures, manicures. . . . Girls should be attractive. Perfume and makeup are a "must" for a good Komsomol girl. . . . Young people must gather and dance.[16]

If marriage was encouraged, divorce—which had been easy in the early period—was now actively discouraged by a succession of increasingly restrictive measures. First came a regulation requiring that each divorce be entered on the person's internal passport; next, sizable fees were introduced; and finally, in 1944, all but political reasons were eliminated as absolute grounds for divorce. Except in such cases, a couple seeking a divorce was required first to go before a People's Tribunal, which was not empowered to grant the divorce but merely to try to effect a reconciliation. Only then could the parties take their case before a Superior Court, where the motives and allegations of husband and wife were weighed and a divorce was either granted or denied. The fact that the court based its decision entirely on *ad hoc* arguments, enhanced its discretionary power and thus the ability to enforce the current party policy.[17]

The renewed emphasis on the family was reflected, in a negative sense, in a modification of Soviet law that made the entire family of a criminal responsible for his offense. In many cases, the families of persons arrested in the great purges of the 1930's perished with the "criminals," presumably because it was feared that family resentment would generate new disloyalty to the regime.[18]

The changes in family policy culminated in a 1944 decree, the character of which is evident from its full title—"'Decree on increase of state aid to pregnant women, mothers with many children, and unmarried mothers; on strengthening measures for the protection of motherhood and childhood; on the establishment of the title of 'Mother Heroine'; and on the institution of the order of 'Motherhood Glory' and the 'Motherhood Medal.' " [19] By this decree the distinction between civil and unregistered marriages, and hence between legitimate and illegitimate children, was reestablished. Unmarried persons and parents of only one or two children were subjected to special taxes, while Stakhanovite mothers received progressively larger subsidies according to number of children. A woman who had borne and raised ten or more children was entitled to the highest award—the title of "Mother Heroine," carrying a lump payment of 5,000 rubles plus 300 rubles monthly for four years.

While the regime justified the system of family allowances in terms of social welfare, the device of progressive premiums was, as Schlesinger has pointed out, primarily intended as "an incentive to the production of enormous numbers of children." [20] In line with this intent, the already stringent restrictions

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[15] Klaus Mehnert, *Youth in Soviet Russia*, Harcourt Brace, New York, 1933, p. 222 and *passim*.

[16] Quoted in Nicholas S. Timasheff, *The Great Retreat: The Growth and Decline of Communism in Russia*, Dutton, New York, 1946, p. 317.

[17] Cf. G. M. Sverdlov, *Some Problems of Judicial Divorce*, quoted in Schlesinger, *op. cit.*, p. 378.

[18] Cf. Zbigniew K. Brzezinski, *The Permanent Purge: Politics in Soviet Totalitarianism*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1956, pp. 82–4, 110.

[19] Full text in Schlesinger, *op. cit.*, p. 367 ff. See also Sverdlov, *Soviet Legislation on Marriage and the Family*, summarized in *Soviet Studies*, 2:2, October 1950, pp. 192–201.

[20] Under the 1944 decree, by Schlesinger's estimate, a mother of six or more children could acquire an income sufficient to live modestly during her childbearing years. She always "had a great incentive to cover the expense of bringing up her older children by having new ones." *op. cit.*, p. 397.

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on abortion were replaced by a flat prohibition except when they were necessary to save the mother's life.[21]

Why the Change?

THE usual explanation of the shift in Soviet family policy after the early 1930's has been, to borrow the words of Maurice Hindus, that "conservatism, in the sense of respect for the acceptable heritage of the past, as well as for the fruitful achievement of the present, was edging radicalism out of the picture." [22] This has been the dominant interpretation put forward by Soviet apologists, and it was also the essential theme of such profoundly anti-Stalinist works as Timasheff's *The Great Retreat* and Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed.*

In retrospect such an explanation seems somewhat wide of the mark. While it is difficult to find a single adjective to describe Stalinist society, "conservative" scarcely is the *mot juste* to characterize the stupendous goals of the five-year plans, the collectivization of the peasants at the rate of one million a day (with 5 to 6 million discards), the Moscow show-trials, the *Gleichschaltung* of the arts and sciences, and the territorial expansion in Europe and Asia.

If one can speak of a "conservative" period in Soviet history, when the revolution was "betrayed" in a great "retreat," it was rather the period of the New Economic Policy (1921–28), when the party granted a temporary respite to small producers and petty merchants. This truce with capitalism was ended by the wholesale collectivization of agriculture and the first Five-Year Plan, which Stalin himself termed "a profound revolution . . . equivalent in its consequences to the revolution of October 1917." [23] The new family policy, though often justified by the party on the basis of bourgeois and even Tsarist precepts, was an integral part of this second Soviet revolution, and it can be understood only as a response to the new needs with which this upheaval confronted the regime.

Essentially two factors underlay the revitalization of the family. The first was the huge population loss resulting from the collectivization program, which later was multiplied by World War II. According to the 1926 census, 71.7 million of Soviet Russia's 82.7 million occupied civilians were engaged in agricultural production. The fundamental transformation effected by the first Five-Year Plan was to bring this dominant sector of the economy under complete state control. The expropriation of peasant holdings was a prerequisite to the super-rapid industrialization, for it furnished the state with the necessary capital and with a cowed labor force.

The cost in human lives, however, was fantastic. Unyielding opponents of the collectivization drive were branded as "kulaks" or, when they were too obviously not well-to-do peasants, as "kulak-followers"—or even, as in the case of the urban intellectual, Bukharin, as persons with a "kulak soul." According to a 1930 report by Molotov, the kulak section of the population, including their families, totaled 6 or 7 million.[24] This was the number of persons ousted from their land and not permitted to enter the new collectives.[25] In the words of an American Communist journalist's eyewitness account, they constituted a new social class of "pariahs without any rights which need be respected, and without any knowledge as to what they might do to be saved." [26]

How many of these fled to the cities, how many were sent to the forced-labor camps that were established during the first Five-Year Plan, and how many lost their lives in the process or in the consequent famine of 1932–33, it is impossible to determine precisely. One authoritative study estimated that between 5 and 5½ million Soviet citizens disappeared between the censuses of 1926 and 1939.[27]

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[21] Despite the previous limitations, the number of abortions had increased to such an extent that, in some cases, they equaled or even surpassed births. Thus, 371 abortions were recorded for every 100 live births in Moscow during 1934. See Frank Lorimer, *The Population of the Soviet Union: History and Prospects*, League of Nations, Geneva, 1946, pp. 127–128. This increase was undoubtedly due to the hardships imposed by the enforced collectivization, which reached its height in 1930, and to the famine of 1932–33.

[22] Hindus, *op. cit.*, p. 117. This was not, however the author's main emphasis in another work written at the time of the turn, *The Great Offensive*, Smith & Haas, New York, 1933.

[23] J. V. Stalin, *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks)*, International Publishers, New York, 1939, p. 305. "The distinguishing feature of this revolution," he added, "is that it was accomplished *from above*, on the initiative of the state, and directly supported *from below* by the millions of peasants who were fighting to throw off kulak bondage and live in freedom in the collective farms."

[24] *International Press Correspondence*, 1930, p. 373.

[25] As Stalin put it, "It is ridiculous and fatuous to expatiate today on the expropriation of the kulaks. You do not lament the loss of the hair of one who has been beheaded. There is another question which seems no less ridiculous: whether the kulak should be permitted to join the collective farms. Of course not, for he is a sworn enemy of the collective farm movement. Clear, one would think." "Problems of Agrarian Policy in the USSR," in *Selected Writings*, International Publishers, New York, 1942, pp. 162–163.

[26] Anna Louise Strong, *The Soviets Conquer Wheat*, Holt, New York, 1931, p. 81.

[27] Lorimer, *op. cit.*, pp. 133–137.

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AFTER THE WEDDING

—And now, my son, you'll probably forget me altogether!
—What are you saying, Mother? Who else will take care of me and my wife?

—From *Krokodil*, Moscow, September 10, 1955.

Stalin's own estimate of the loss of human life as a result of collectivization was 10 millions.[28]

Additional population losses during the war (1941–45) were estimated by one authority at an excess mortality of 12 to 19 million, plus a birth deficit of 8 million.[29] These night-marish figures, however, now appear to have been conservative. At the Twentieth CPSU Congress last February, the reports on industrial production included both absolute and per capita figures, and these data indicated a war population loss, including birth deficit, of something between 30 and 40 million.[30] This conclusion has since been confirmed by the highest Soviet authorities.[31] Hence, the total depletion resulting from both collectivization and the war must be reckoned at the staggering level of 35–50 million—roughly equivalent to the population of France.

Need for Stability

THE first need that the shift in family policy reflected, then, was to replace these manpower losses. The second was to restore stability to Soviet society, which the second revolution of the late 1920's and early 1930's had broken down into a dangerously fluid mass. The social structure of the country had undergone tremendous upheaveals and the need for consolidation and stabilization could also be met in part by the new family policy.

By the mid-1930's the new generation of parents had lived through nearly two decades of Soviet society. For many of them the *élan* of the early revolutionary years had been a personal experience, not wholly erased by subsequent difficulties and disappointments. Such parents presumably would not try to instil in their children's minds a faith in the displaced institutions of Tsarism, which they knew principally through Soviet propaganda. On the contrary, many of them could probably be counted on to inculcate patriotism and loyalty to the Soviet regime in the youngest generation; and the regime needed whatever stability a retightening of family bonds might afford it.

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[28] See Winston Churchill, *The Hinge of Fate*, Houghton-Mifflin, Boston, 1950, p. 408.

[29] Warren W. Eason, "Population and the Labor Force," in *Soviet Economic Growth: Conditions and Perspectives* (ed. by Abram Bergson), Row Peterson, Evanston, Ill., 1953, pp. 101–125.

[30] See article by Harrison E. Salisbury, *New York Times*, March 11, 1956, pp. 1, 26; and comment by Eason, in the same newspaper, March 26, 1956, p. 10. Salisbury estimated the loss at 40 million, Eason at 30 to 37 million. The discrepancy arises in part from differing estimates of the present population, in part from different assumptions concerning the rate of postwar increase.

[31] Cf. "Russia's Missing Millions," *Economist*, June 9, 1956.

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But Soviet policy is not completely a rational adaptation to practical needs. The party planners may start a change in policy as a rational response to such needs, but in their impetuousness to make the country swallow the new line immediately, completely and enthusiastically, they generally overshoot the original mark. Totalitarian systems have no built-in feedback mechanism to check this tendency, and their course is typically marked by spasmotic reversals from one extreme to the other. This characteristic of the system has been no less manifest in Soviet family policy than in other policy spheres.

By a realistic appraisal, however, the shifting policy line of the government has probably had less real and profound effects on the Soviet family than the more constant social conditions.[32] Urbanization, which began before the revolution, became a powerful surge under the impact of collectivization and industrialization and is still continuing at a rapid rate.[33] As elsewhere, this transformation has produced smaller, looser families—a tendency reinforced in the Soviet Union by the persistent shortages of food, consumer goods, and particularly housing. Despite their recent upward tendency, general living standards in the USSR remain at a lower level than before the end of the NEP in 1928.

Though there has been no significant modification in the basic character and objectives of Soviet Communism, the present leadership in the Kremlin has condemned the oppressive and inflexible policies of the Stalinist era and indicated its own more rational approach by a slight degree of liberalization. The Great Thaw, to borrow Dwight Macdonald's metaphor, has achieved the temperature of Northern Greenland.

Should this trend continue, it will be reflected in Soviet family policy, and certain changes already effected may be interpreted as indicative of the probable direction. Under a 1954 decree, abortion was once more legalized under certain conditions. That this was clearly not intended to lower the birth rate, however, is indicated by the continued frenetic denunciations of neo-Malthusians as "facist, man-hating cannibals." [34] Pregnant women are now entitled to be paid while on maternity leave, the length of which has also been extended, since April 1, 1956, from 77 to 112 calendar days.[35] Divorce, however, remains expensive and difficult to obtain.

* * *

Neither the political nor the social milieu of the Soviet system has been conducive to the eventual evolution of Western family norms. When the policy was ostensibly "liberal," parents were not given the right freely to determine what size family they would have. When it became "conservative," religious and other traditionalist norms did not set the pattern of family life.

Whatever the coating, the basic ingredients of the pill remain the same. The shifts in Soviet family policy, however significant in incidentals, have always been in line with the fundamental purpose of maintaining party strength within the USSR and maximum Soviet power in the international sphere. With respect to these fundaments, there has been no "great retreat," nor is any indicated for the future.

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[32] Cf. Kent Geiger and Alex Inkeles, "The Family in the USSR," *Marriage and Family Living*, 16: 4, November 1954, pp. 397-404.

[33] The number of cities of 200,000 or more inhabitants increased from 12 in 1926 to 39 in 1939. Over the same period, the population of Moscow grew from 2,029,000 to 4,137,000, and that of Leningrad from 1,690,000 to 3,191,000. Lorimer, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

[34] A. Y. Popev, *Contemporary Malthusianism—The Man-Hating Ideology of Imperialists* [in Russian], Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1953.

[35] See *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, New York, vol. 8, No. 13, May 9, 1956, p. 30.

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Marxism and the Study of History

By HUGH TREVOR-ROPER

Editors' note: *As the Soviet historians are busily re-rewriting history, revising their "lines of research" and bringing them in conformity with "Leninist principles," it becomes more than ever necessary to examine their ostensible basis—namely, the Marxist theory of historical materialism. Assuming that Soviet theoreticians are correct in maintaining that their tenets stem from the Marxist interpretation of history, what validity is there in the latter? Have Marx's views stood the test of time as well as the test of objective analysis? Or, assuming that the principles of Soviet historians are different from those guiding Marxist historians abroad, what is there in common between them that makes it possible for both to claim Marx as their spiritual authority? These are some of the questions to which Mr. Trevor-Roper's essay addresses itself.*

HISTORY, it seems, has become the modern Queen of Sciences. From the humble position to which Dr. Samuel Johnson relegated it as an arrangement of industriously collected facts, history has come, in this century, to be the most controversial, the most combustible of studies. Every political or ideological movement has its historical theory. There is orthodoxy, there are heresies. The greatest orthodoxy (in the eyes of believers), the greatest heresy (in the eyes of unbelievers) is the Marxist theory of history which now dominates historical thinking in Communist Europe and Asia and has many powerful advocates even in the West.

What is this Marxist theory of history? Why is it now so powerful? It is easier to take the second of these two questions first. For it is partly because there is a general demand for "philosophies of history" that Marxian historical philosophy has achieved such success. Marxism may compete with similar but rival philosophies on its own merits, but the public taste for such philosophies naturally preceded any particular or competing attempts to gratify it.

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Rise of the "Prophet" Historians

ONE obvious reason for this change of taste is what may be called the drying-up of the classical stream of historiography. With the vast increase in the mere bulk of historical evidence caused by the opening of archives in the last century, a kind of hopelessness has overcome many conventional historians. For how, they ask, can one ever compete with the enormous weight of this ever-lengthening ever-deepening past? Their answer has been to draw in their horns. Always seeking finality, fearful of giving any answer which some new document might reverse, they have become narrow specialists, knowing more and more about less and less, and saying less and less about it. This timidity of the specialist in turn intimidates the layman. For when the experts are unable to master even minute periods of history, how can the layman, who lacks their training, hope to understand any historical problem? Besides, the answers of the expert seem to the layman not only uncertain but trivial. For if history is to interest the layman at all, it must be because it has some general significance. The professional historians, disputing about a cabinet crisis in a petty European court in the eighteenth century or the style of knitting in a medieval nunnery, answer no general question. Therefore the layman turns away from them and looks for someone who can range at ease over the ever-

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extending centuries and find some general significance in the bewildering mass of historical detail.

This process has been taking place for some time, but it has been greatly accelerated in our own day by a new factor affecting our attitude toward history. That factor is the general air of crisis which—at least since 1945—has made itself felt in the West. In the nineteenth century there were a few historical prophets who rejected the comfortable optimism of their contemporaries and foresaw alternatives to endless progress; but they went unheeded. Now the complacency of the nineteenth century is irretrievably lost. We no longer feel that history is the history of progress, or that our civilization is unique. We do not even feel that it is superior to other civilizations which have perished, nor exempt from their laws of mortality. And so we are now more ready to listen to prophets of woe or at least to prophets of change. Fearing that civilization is in crisis, we look to history not for detail or for diversion but for serious lessons: for precepts which must be drawn not from mere superficial incidents but from the deep roots of history, and from its whole range.[1] We do not look in vain. Standing before us, larger than life, no longer neglected by their contemporaries, as were their predecessors, we see the modern prophets of History: Spengler, Toynbee, Marx.[2]

The Marxian Prophecy as "Science"

AMONG these three, Marx is at present the most effective. Indeed, in one sense, Spengler and Toynbee are even his auxiliaries. For all three maintain that historical laws condemn the West to irremediable decline; but whereas Spengler and Toynbee say so in tones of gloom mitigated only by occasional sighing after a Messiah, Marx says so in tones of confidence. Toynbee, who had begun by thinking that Western Christendom might survive by returning to its original inspiration and plunging back into medieval Catholicism, has since 1945 despaired of even that desperate remedy and now preaches a non-European messianism.[3] Marxism, by contrast, moves confidently on. Like the early Christians in the days of the pagan Roman Empire, the Marxists prophesy the collapse of contemporary civilization not in a defeatist but in an exultant spirit, as men who have a positive alternative to offer. Such confidence is compelling, and consequently a number of Western intellectuals whose will to survive is sapped by the prognoses of a Toynbee find themselves converted to the more positive doctrines of Marx; or, in less intellectual language, they leap on the bandwagon. And what a bandwagon it is! The physical conquest of new empires in Europe and Asia seems to those who are on the side of the "big battalions" proof that Marxist history may well be right. Has not the Marxist interpretation of the past been proved scientifically correct by the most exacting of all tests—success? Having in fact proved an accurate prophecy of the way we have already half-gone, does it not offer an accurate prophecy of the way we must go in the future?

Such are some of the reasons why Marxist history has won over converts. Though it is humanly understandable that these reasons be held, they are not thereby made intellectually valid. If the truth were necessarily on the side of the big battalions, then Mohammedanism was "true" in the Dark Ages, Christianity in the sixteenth century. Nor is a mood of defeatism in the West, if indeed there is such a mood, evidence that Western civilization is on its way out. There was a similar mood of defeatism in the early seventeenth century, when men also lamented the impotent senility of the world and looked either for the Last Trump or a new Messiah. Philosophers at that time agreed that the world was running down, that Nature was in decay; Jew and Gentile alike calculated the imminent year of Armageddon. In fact this defeatism of seventeenth century Europe was but a passing crisis of conscience, as ours also may be. It is erroneous, in this writer's view, to judge the truth of theories either by the physical force of those who advance them or by the mood in which they are received. They should be judged by their inherent logic and their empirical validity when tested against the facts. Marxist history claims to be scientific: let it then be tested scientifically.

The Economic Interpretation of History

FIRST of all, what *is* the Marxist philosophy of history? Its basic assumption is that human history is conditioned not by ideas or institutions or man-made laws but by the economic organization of society, which in turn is based on the mechanism of

[1] This general change of attitude toward history is shown in Professor Geoffrey Barraclough's *History in a Changing World*, Oxford; Blackwell, 1955.

[2] In the author's opinion, all three can be shown to be demonstrably wrong in their reasoning. The best study of Spengler is H. Stuart Hughes, *Oswald Spengler*, New York; Scribners, 1952. The invalidity of Toynbee's method is best exposed by Professor Pieter Geyl in his essays in *Debates with Historians*, The Hague; Nijhoff, 1955.

[3] This radical difference is discernible between the six volumes of Toynbee's *Study of History*, published in 1934–39 and the last four, published in 1954.

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production and exchange of goods. Laws, ideas, institutions may preserve and protect society, but they do not determine its basic nature. Society is formed by the complex economic system of which contemporaries are often unaware but which historians can discover even if, in doing so, they often oversimplify it. Moreover, the economic systems which are the fountainhead of history are not static, but dynamic; and the motive power which animates them are the struggles between classes which, in any society, are divided from each other by their different relationship to the means of production.

Thus, say the Marxists, if we are to understand and use history, it cannot be solely the history of courts and cabinets and armies; nor is it even, as Gibbon called it, the register of the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind. It is rather the history of the class struggle of which all other developments commonly described as History are but the highly-colored epiphenomena, outward symptoms not inner causes, as the flush is of the fever. For this reason the layman who seeks the "meaning" of history and seeks to learn a lesson from it may now avoid much of the tedious detail with which the "professional historians" must perforce at times concern themselves. Under Marxist guidance, the layman can go straight to the "relevant" part of history: the economic system and the social structure. Such is the first premise of Marxist history.

One may justifiably ask in what sense this conception of history is peculiarly "Marxist." The first objection to be raised against Marxist historians is that they falsely claim a monopoly over an historical approach which is in fact quite independent of both Marx and Marxism, which preceded Marx in time and whose modern exponents owe little, perhaps even nothing, to the ferocious systematization which Marx sought, a century ago, to impose upon it. The theory that political power is simply the reflection of economic power was advanced in the seventeenth century by the English theorist James Harrington, whose concept that "empire follows the balance of property" was declared at the time to be "a noble discovery, whereof the honor belongs solely to him . . ." The relationship between economic and political systems was further explored by the great Scottish thinkers of the eighteenth century—in particular David Hume and Adam Smith.

If the best modern historians are more interested in problems of comparative history, or economic change and growth, of social structure and social adjustment than in "straight" political history, that is not necessarily an indication that they have been influenced by Marx. Indeed, it is probable that they would still be pursuing these interests even if Marx had never lived. Their masters more probably are other thinkers—Tocqueville, Fustel de Coulanges, Burckhardt, Pirenne, Dopsch, Hamilton, Keynes, Marc Bloch, and many others who have contributed far more than Marx to the study of history as a science (though not, of course, as a dogma), but whom the Marxists now seek to drive out of memory except insofar as they can be turned into precursors or satellites of their master. The result is that much of the credit for the modern interest in social and economic history is arbitrarily claimed for Marx alone, and the work of far more important historical thinkers is described only as a "contribution to Marxist sociology." [4]

Yet perhaps this strange perversion of intellectual history should not surprise us too much. After all, it is very similar to the action of Lenin in political matters. Lenin, the leader of a particular sect, violently seized control of a broad movement of social protest, and by his success as a revolutionary politician drove all "heretics" into subordination or the wilderness, after which he was able to claim for himself and his disciples the sole right to represent that much wider movement which had in fact existed before him as it did beside him and does after him. It seems to the author that what Lenin and his followers have done to the course of socialist politics is very similar to what the Marxists have done to the course of historical studies.

Something Old—Something New

THUS the first and most necessary step in considering Marxist historiography is to drive its exponents back within their proper limits and prevent them from usurping the credit due other and, in fact, quite independent schools of thought. What, then, are the characteristics which genuinely distinguish the Marxist historical method? The answer to this question was given best by Marx himself, in a letter of March 1852 to Joseph Weydemeyer:

> As to myself, no credit is due to me for discovering the existence of classes in modern society, nor yet the struggle between them. Long before me bourgeois historians had described the historical development of this class struggle and bourgeois economists [had described] the economic anatomy of the classes. What I did

[4] This point is clearly shown in the controversy "Marx as Historian" which took place in the correspondence columns of the *New Statesman and Nation* (London) August 20, 1955, to October 29, 1955. In this controversy every Marxist writer argued that Marx was in some way the sole inspirer of the modern interest in social and economic history.

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was to prove: (1) that the *existence of classes* is only bound up with *particular, historic phases in the development of production;* (2) that the class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship* of the proletariat; (3) that this dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society*. [5]

This careful isolation of Marxism from those "bourgeois" social studies which are now so unscrupulously claimed as an inseparable part of the Marxist inheritance was again emphasized by Lenin when attacking "the miserable philistines and petty bourgeois democrats" like Kautsky, who are now claimed as Marxist thinkers. Lenin protested:

> The theory of the class struggle was *not* created by Marx, but by the bourgeoisie before Marx and, generally speaking, it is acceptable to the bourgeoisie. . . . A Marxist is one who *extends* the acceptance of the class struggle to the acceptance of the *dictatorship of the proletariat*. This is where the profound difference lies between a Marxist and an ordinary petty (and even big) bourgeois. This is the touchstone on which the *real* understanding and acceptance of Marxism should be tested. [6]

These statements could hardly be clearer, and it is most important that they should be remembered, especially by those who think that one can study social history only under Marxist guidance, and that the best modern historians are what they are thanks to the influence of Marx. In fact, as these words of Marx and Lenin show, all that Marx claimed to have done was, in effect, to sweep up the ideas already advanced by other thinkers and annex them to a crude philosophical dogma. It is a strange irony that his followers should now claim, as the authentic property of their party, the general social ideas which Marx borrowed from his contemporaries (and for which he explicitly rejected any responsibility), while soft-pedalling the philosophical dogma which was his only original contribution and which, according to Lenin, was "the touchstone on which the *real* understanding and acceptance of Marxism should be accepted." However the reason for this *volte-face* is clear enough. The social analysis which Marx merely borrowed and perverted remains, in its unperverted use, a valuable instrument for historical research; the theory which he invented, and by which he perverted that social analysis, has been disproved by every test to which it can be subjected.

The Premises of Marxist "Logic"

LET us look for a moment at this theory. According to Marx, human history falls into historic phases which are distinguished by different forms of social organization and which replace each other by a dialectical process, a process which modern Marxists admit to be "the very backbone of Marxism." [7] The weakness of this theory as a general theory is—as M. Julien Benda once drily observed—that Marx gives only one instance of its ever having happened. This was, of course, the replacement of "feudalism" by "capitalism." [8] On the strength of this one instance (which shall be considered further) Marx does not hesitate to prophesy that the necessary next stage in the same process is the replacement of "capitalism" by a new social form, *viz*: the classless society which will be achieved through the dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus the Marxist general theory of history can be said to rest on two mutually corroborative instances, one which has occurred in the past and one which presumably will occur in the future. The accuracy (so far) of Marxist prophecies about the future is said to prove the validity of the Marxist historical analysis of the past, which might otherwise seem rather abstract; and the profundity of this historical analysis is said to guarantee, in turn, the accuracy of the prophecy about the future, which might otherwise seem rather speculative. This interdependence is an interesting proposition but it is perhaps better not to accept it until the two instances have been tested separately.

First let us take the past. According to Marxist theory, the crucial period of the past is of course that during which capitalism replaced feudalism. But when was this period? It is easy to say (and one does not need to be a Marxist to do so) that in the sixteenth-century European society was still primarily an agrarian and aristocratic society which can be loosely described as "feudal." It is also easy to say that in the nineteenth century it was "capitalist." But it is not so simple to define when and how the decisive struggle between declining feudalism and ascendant capitalism took place—if, indeed, there ever was such a struggle. English Marxists have decided that it took place during the English revolution of 1640–60, and it is therefore necessary to look briefly at their treatment of this period.

The ablest Marxist historian who has sought thus to interpret the Puritan Revolution is the Englishman Christopher Hill. In his book *The English Revolution*,[9] Mr. Hill uses doctrines borrowed from the anti-Marxist Max Weber and the Fabian R. H. Tawney

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[5] Marx, *Selected Works*, London; Lawrence & Wishart, 1942, Vol. I, p. 377.

[6] Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, chapter 2, section 3, quoting Marx, *ibid.*

[7] Giuliano Procacci, "Dal Feudalismo al Capitalismo" (From Feudalism to Capitalism) in *Societá*, Turin, 1955, Vol. XI, pp. 123 ff.

[8] Julien Benda, *La trahison des clercs*, Grasset, 1927, p. 257.

[9] Christopher Hill, *The English Revolution*, London; Lawrence & Wishart, 1940.

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(whom he condescendingly describes as "not Marxist but very aware of the economic factor") in an attempt to demonstrate that the English Puritan Revolution was the effective showdown between the buoyant "capitalist" classes, represented by Oliver Cromwell, and the "decaying" relics of "feudalism" represented by Charles I.[10] Mr. Hill concludes that the Revolution represented the triumph of capitalism over feudalism and he asserts that this conclusion arises logically and necessarily from the evidence. His "evidence," however, includes the assumptions that the early seventeenth century was a period of economic advance for the "capitalist" bourgeoisie and gentry and that puritanism was in some respects a "capitalist" ideology, both assumptions which have been strongly challenged of late. Recent research has convinced many of the best historians that the early seventeenth century (at any rate after 1620) was a period of economic decline for the bourgeoisie, and that the equation of puritanism with capitalism simply will not do.

The Procrustean Approach

IF these assumptions are rejected, it would seem that the Marxist version of the Revolution must also be rejected, as resting on false premises. But behold, a miracle! In 1954 another English Marxist, Mr. E. J. Hobsbawm, wrote a long article on "The General Crisis of the European Economy in the 17th Century," in which he accepted the change of premises and agreed with the arguments of modern French economic historians that production and commerce were in general decline in the early seventeenth century. The seventeenth century, Hobsbawm argued, was a period of general economic decline in Europe, and "even in countries which did not decline, there were secular business difficulties." Indeed, Hobsbawm goes so far as to associate even the messianic movement of the European Jews in the middle of the century with the decline of prices.[11]

It would seem that such a complete reversal of Mr. Hill's premises would logically entail at least some adjustment of his conclusions. The English Revolution can hardly be painted as a victory for rising capitalism if capitalism is everywhere in decline. But not at all. Mr. Hobsbawm dogmatically tacks the old conclusion on to the new premises!

> The economic history of the modern world from the middle of the 17th century hinges on that of England . . . the English Revolution, with all its far-reaching results is *therefore* (author's italics) in a real sense the most decisive product of the 17th century crisis.

Thus, using completely different evidence, Mr. Hobsbawm still finds a "logical" path to the same general "conclusion": in spite of the reversal of its basis, the English Revolution signified the triumph of the capitalist bourgeoisie. One is forced to assume that the "conclusion" was not really derived from the evidence at all, but preceded it.

Indeed, the more one looks at the methodology of Marxist historians, the more one is covinced that evidence is selected simply to buttress up immutable and unsubstantiated dogma. The one conclusion that must always be kept inviolate, however the evidence may change, is that there was a decisive struggle between "feudalism" and "capitalism." In reality, however, even Marxian historians cannot agree on what precisely are "feudalism" and "capitalism." According to Mr. Hill, the Dutch revolt against Spain is the classic example of a "bourgeois revolution," in which the Calvinist Dutch represent the "puritan capitalist" spirit. On the other hand, according to Mr. Hobsbawm the Dutch economy was not capitalist but "feudal." Similarly, Marxists have not yet been able to decide whether the economy of the medieval Italian cities was "capitalist" or "feudal," and it has now become a major industry among Marxists to discuss the real meaning of these terms.[12] It is difficult to see how the existence of an historic struggle between "capitalism" and "feudalism" can be proved when these terms themselves have not yet been defined.

At this point one cannot help observing how sterile Marxist historiography must seem to anyone who is aware of the great advances being made by non-Marxist sociologists, upon whose work it has become so largely parasitic. To read, for example, the work of the disciples of Marc Bloch in France, or of Earl J. Hamilton in America, and then to see the Marxists subordinating all this provocative work to barren arguments about the meaning of arbitrary words like "feudalism" or "capitalism" is to turn from life to pedantry. Marxist historians are now like Byzantine theologians disputing the case of *homoousia* or *homoiousia*, or the inhabitants of Lilliput fighting as

[10] The author has contested this interpretation in an article "The Social Origins of the Great Rebellion," in *History Today*, London, June, 1955, Vol. V, pp. 376–82.

[11] In *Past and Present*, Nos. 5–6, 1954. Mr. Hobsbawm does not achieve this general picture without certain unobtrusive contradictions. For example, English textiles are "shoddy and cheap" on p. 43, while of "good quality" and "expensive" on p. 44. The Baltic reduced its exports of food and declined in trade on p. 35, but on p. 44 we read that "the Baltic now began to feed not only Northern Europe but also the Mediterranean," *etc.*

[12] For this discussion see *The Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism*, a Marxist symposium published by *Science and Society*, New York, 1954.

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to which end of a boiled egg should be broken. This is not to deny that there are Marxists who have written good history, but it is never *as* Marxists that they have done so. When they *have* made valuable contributions, it is only because they have detached themselves from distinctive Marxist precepts and written what Marx and Lenin would have called "bourgeois" social history.[13]

Oracle in Error

Turning from history to prophecy, we find the same extraordinary indifference to the connection between evidence and conclusion. Whereas Marxists contend that by using their intellectual system they have correctly predicted the events of this century, a close look at at least four of the major events of the past 50 years reveals Marx's predictions to have been so grotesquely inaccurate that they perforce must invalidate the intellectual system which set them forth.

First, Marx declared that within the capitalist system, capitalists would decrease in numbers and become richer while the proletariat would increase and become poorer. He thus envisaged a large, growing, undifferentiated proletariat faced by a small dwindling group of owner-plutocrats whom ultimately it would easily overthrow. In fact, the history of the last century has shown that the proletariat is not undifferentiated—far from uniting, the workers of the world are determined to establish and preserve "differentials" between themselves. And capitalism, far from privileging only a diminishing number of plutocrats, has in many countries brought about such a rise in the level of income and standard of living that the broad mass of workers has thoroughly accepted the system.

Secondly, Marx assumed that communism would be established first, and indeed could only be established, in fully industrialized countries. In fact, for the reasons just given, it is precisely the industrialized countries which have been most immune to communism, while the agrarian countries of Eastern Europe and Asia have fallen sway to the movement. The industrialization of Russia did not precede the Communist revolution but followed it.

Thirdly, Marx totally failed to predict the phenomenon of fascism as at least a temporary alternative development to communism. In this he showed far less insight than the great Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt, who as far back as the 1870's foresaw the rise of the "terrible simplifiers" of our day. When fascism appeared, the Marxists quickly brought their prophecies up to date, explaining the movement as merely the last convulsion of capitalism and therefore much too insignificant a detail for Marx to have mentioned. This explanation is no more satisfactory than Professor Toynbee's device of dismissing the World War of 1939–45, for which he had not budgeted when he began his study of history, as a mere "secondary war." In any case, it seems outrageous to dismiss fascism, which has dominated a whole generation and nearly conquered the world, as an unimportant detail. In the writer's view, a systematic theory of history which has to be so radically adjusted to fit inconvenient facts is simply not worth its keep.

Finally, Marx insisted as an essential part of his theory that the dictatorship of the proletariat was simply a temporary phase leading to a classless society. No comment is needed on this "prophecy."

Faith by Force

In the face of these facts one may well wonder how it is possible for Marxists to maintain that their system illuminates either the past or the future. The answer seems to be by pure effrontery. Just as Soviet historians shamelessly rewrite the history of the Communist Party to eliminate inconvenient episodes or personalities, so Western Marxist historians incessantly rewrite history, changing the evidence in accordance with the fashion of the moment or with newly discovered and inescapable facts, but always maintaining that the old conclusions and predictions for the future are still valid. To perform this sleight of hand they need to confuse their readers. Hence the oracular ambiguity of much Marxist writing thanks to which Marx, like the priestess of Delphi, can generally be found in retrospect to have prophesied whatever has in fact occurred.

Hence also the complete absence of any great Marxist historians. For it is an extraordinary fact that in spite of a century of Marxism and a vast amount of Marxist historical writing in the field of social history, including dozens of regular periodicals,

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[13] Since Mr. Christopher Hill's work was critized earlier, it is only fair to praise, in this connection, his new volume *Economic Problems of the Church*; Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1956, as excellent "bourgeois" history. It is true that some Marxist general conclusions are loosely and implausibly superimposed upon his excellent analysis, but they need not distract the reader. Other excellent "non-Marxist" studies by Marxist writers are M. Pierre Vilar's works on Spanish history *e. g.*, *Dans Barcelone au 18e siecle*, (Barcelona; Historicos y documentos de los Archivos de Protocolos, 1950); and Mr. Moses Finley's studies of Homeric society, *e. g.*, *The World of Odysseus*, N. Y., Viking Press, 1954, and the best part of E. A. Kosminsky's *Studies in English Agrarian History in the 13th Century* (English translation) Oxford; Blackwell, 1956.

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there has been no Marxist historian whose name can rank even with the minor masters of the subject. All they have produced is an army of dim scholiasts busily commenting on each other's *scholia* and loudly claiming to have inspired the work of other historians who have long ago left them behind in their barren, circuitous, resonant cave of Adullam. In the dim past of the nineteenth century, when the Marxist dogma was new and untested, it may have inspired some historical research, as new ideas often do even if they are in fact erroneous. For historical knowledge, like other knowledge, is advanced by theory and only disciplined by facts. But now we are in the mid-twentieth century. Soviet Russian communism is indeed a formidable world power. But it is not the Marxist dialectic which has brought it to that height. The relationship is the other way round. Disproved by all intellectual tests, the Marxist interpretation of history is sustained and irrationally justified by Soviet power alone.

The United Front In Spain

David T. Cattell:
Communism and the Spanish Civil War
University of California Press,
Berkeley-Los Angeles, 1956,
290 pp.

Reviewed by Victor Alba

THERE are three well-defined positions with respect to the role of communism in the Spanish Civil War. One—the official position—affirms that the war broke out because of the desire to prevent Communist domination of Spain; another position denies the existence of any danger of communism either before or during the war; and the third maintains that although before the war communism represented no danger to Spain because of its meager strength, nevertheless during the struggle it acquired in republican quarters a prominence that made it a threat.

David T. Cattell inclines toward the third of these interpretations. That the Spanish problem continues to be of moment is indicated by the fact that Cattell's book on communism in the Spanish Civil War reached its second printing within a few months, a rare thing for works on localized topics of modern history. This alone would warrant giving it careful attention. But in addition, the book makes a series of disclosures and warnings that merit emphasis. A reading of this volume will clarify many ideas and quash numerous prejudices and false notions built up by propaganda.

The Communist Party of Spain, outgrowth of a schism in the party and in the Socialist Youth groups in 1921, failed to show appreciable gains. The strength of socialism and, above all, of anarcho-syndicalism, combined with the mistrust of the Soviet regime that prevailed among the Spanish working class, prevented its development. The CNT [Confederacion Nacional del Trabajo—National Federation of Labor], the anarchosyndicalist trade-union organization, had adhered to the Third International in 1919, but it refused to accept Lenin's twenty-one conditions and, after a visit to the USSR by a number of its leaders, it withdrew from the Communist International and continued faithful to its anarchistic principles.

The ideological colonialism of the Communists was more noticeable in Spain because of the profound differences between that country and the rest of Western Europe. For example, in 1931, when the Republic was proclaimed, the Communists asked for "all power to the soviets," in a country where nobody had any idea of what a soviet was. Naturally, the Communists operated in an absolute vacuum.

Cattell scarcely puts enough stress on these background facts, which enable one to see how artificial was the development achieved by the Communists

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Party during the civil war and which would help one to understand why the party represented no real danger to the country or to its stability before the war. The causes of agitation that prevailed in Spain were of another order and Cattell subjects them to keen study. Those causes included, first of all, the land problem; next, the problem of nationalities; thirdly, the heritage left by any dictatorship, however mild, which obstructs for at least one generation the learning of normal democratic processes.

In October 1934, when the movement broke out against the entrance into the government of elements from the CEDA [Confederacion Espanola de Derechas Autonomas—Spanish Confederation of Right-Wing Autonomists], which had not professed the Republican faith, the Communists had no part in the Workers Alliance that was created. And when the Popular Front was formed in 1935, the initiative did not come from the Spanish Communists but from Republican groups and from the Socialist Party. Statistics on the elections of February 1936, in which the Popular Front was victorious, support Cattell when he affirms that prior to the war the Communist danger did not exist. And in the days following July 19, 1936, when street fighting had ended and civil war had begun, the major forces in the Republican camp were the Anarchosyndicalists, the Socialists, and to a lesser degree the Republican parties and certain anti-Stalin labor parties. The Communists can be considered as nothing more than a hindmost group—hindmost in respect to their influence, though not through any lack of strength in the vocal chords of their members, and hindmost also in respect to the number of their people sent to the improvised battle-fronts.

In January 1939, at the time when the city of Barcelona fell to the Nationalist forces, the Communists had complete control of the government, and even three months later, in March, they ventured to attempt a real *coup d'etat*, by means of governmental decrees engineered by them, in the central and southern area still in the hands of the Republicans.

What had happened? Cattell relates it in his book, with very few errors of detail and with great objectivity. Soviet aid in the form of arms—although it was insufficient and was fully paid for, and more, with a large part of the reserves of Spanish gold—permitted the local Communists to impose conditions. By manipulating the rivalries among various Socialist leaders, the Communists successively eliminated them (Largo Caballero, Indalecio Prieto), in order to end up with a government in full submission to the diplomacy of the Kremlin. This was carried so far that, with the war already ended and Catalonia having fallen, there was a reaction among Socialists and Anarchosyndicalists and the Communists were unseated from all positions of command (in March 1939). Thus, in these broad lines through the web and woof of the cloth, the sinister details were woven. There were the agents of the NKVD and the Communist International—Orlov, Vidale, Togliatti, Pedro, Codovila, etc., about whom Cattell says far too little, perhaps for lack of reliable information. Also there were the murders, both at the front and in the rear guard, of workers opposed to Communist domination (Andres Nin, Camillo Bernieri, Martinez); the trial against the POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificacion Marxista) [Labor Party for Marxist Unification], which was "guilty," in reality, of having been the first party, and almost the only one, which, in the heyday of the Popular Front, denounced the true character of the Moscow trials, the terrorism against the Anarchists, the repressions in the International Brigade, and the infiltration into the Republican and Socialist Parties (which still continues in exile, parallel with the present infiltration into the *Falange* [Phalange] and into the "vertical" trade unions of the present regime in Spain).

Apparently Cattell is not familiar with the book written by Jesus Hernandez, former Minister of Education for the Communist Party during part of the war, entitled *Yo fui ministro de Stalin* [I Was Stalin's Minister]. Had he been acquainted with it, he would have been able to add meaty details to his study of how the envoys of Moscow imposed on Dr. Juan Negrin's government the catastrophic Ebro operation, which liquidated the military capabilities of the Republican Army, for the purpose, Hernandez affirms, of ending the war in Spain without making Moscow look like the Republic's gravedigger and in order to give Hitler this proof of good will at the moment when the first feelers were being put out that were to lead to the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939. In this connection Cattell does not attribute to the Communist domination during 1938–39 the direct responsibility for the overthrow of the Republic which many Republican exiles attach to it. He believes that it would have come anyway, in view of the military inferiority of the Republicans as compared with the Nationalists. Nonetheless, there is no doubt that had it not been for the artificial weakening of the morale of the rear guard—by the "moderating" demagoguery of the Communists—and of the Army, by the battle of the Ebro, the conditions for the termination of the war could have been different and a certain situation of balance might perhaps have

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been reached that would have forced mediation without victors or vanquished.

The lessons of all this are clear:

1. The Communists, who failed before July 1936 in applying to Spain their model Popular Front (since they did not succeed in causing it to take precedence over the *Frente Unico Obrero* [Single Labor Front], as had been ordered by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International), took advantage in masterly fashion of the circumstances of the civil war, and in particular of the noninterventionist policy of the democratic powers, to turn itself into the decisive policy element on the Republican side.

2. To achieve those purposes, the Communists masked their program with an exaggerated nationalism and a social moderation unique in the history of communism up to that time. Along with that they made, in a certain way, a general trial of what proved to be the Communist tactics in the resistance movements during World War II and immediately after the Liberation; or to state it more aptly, during this latter period the Communists availed themselves of the political experience acquired in their activities in the Spanish war. It should not be forgotten that many Italian, French, Yugoslav, Polish, and other Communist leaders participated in the International Brigade.

3. In the same manner the war in Spain might have served as a highly useful experience for the Soviet Army, had it not been that Stalin liquidated most of the group of Russian officers who participated in the Spanish struggle; they were few in number, it is true, but they held key posts. In his secret report to the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Khrushchev charged Stalin, not with having abandoned the Spanish Republic or with having collected extortionately, in gold, for his aid, but with having physically liquidated the Soviet military men who acquired experience in Spain.

4. Another lesson, which appears to have been little heeded, was that there, where a militant workers movement existed, with a firmly rooted ideology (whatever it may have been), the Communist attempts toward the Single Labor Front failed. In spite of the fact that circumstances favored them, they did not arrive at a good understanding with either the left wing of the Socialist Party or the Anarchosyndicalists, although they did achieve it with the Republican parties and with the right-wing Socialists.

5. It is pertinent to point out what was already proved with the trade-union unification in France, in 1935–36, and next in the trend toward the "people's democracies"; that is, that the union of other political forces with the Communists always ends by their giving the latter predominance within the "new" organization. This happened with the Communist and Spanish Socialist Youth groups, which together formed the Unified Socialist Youth group, wherein the leadership was vested in the Communists even though actually they were only a very small minority.

6. Another lesson lies in the fact that not even at times of the greatest political popularity did Moscow fail to show its calculating spirit. The fact that payment was demanded in Spanish gold for arms sent to Spain and the disappearance of the gold deposits from the Bank of Spain in Odessa are clear examples of this permanent state of mind of the Kremlin.

7. Finally, another lesson of the first magnitude appears in the fact that Moscow used the war in Spain first, to demonstrate its "good faith" to the Western democracies (by extinguishing the eager desires of a part of the people for a transformation); then, to demonstrate its "good faith" to the Nazi diplomats with whom the Kremlin had begun to negotiate, by provoking the annihilation of the Republican Army. In the eyes of Moscow and the Spanish Communists, Spain was only one card in the Soviet diplomatic pack of cards.

The Spanish Civil War came to an end, but Soviet objectives have not changed. A study that would make this clear would be highly useful to an understanding of the present situation in Spain.

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How Russian Is Soviet Communism?

Continuity And Change in Russian And Soviet Thought
Edited with an Introduction
by Ernest J. Simmons
Harvard University Press
Cambridge, Massachusetts
1955

Reviewed by Henri Chambre

IT is a well-known axiom of political science that no social system is built on a *tabula rasa*, that a society of a given type cannot be created simply by bringing into play a certain number of ideas and principles. The Soviet Union—and indeed the October Revolution itself—can be understood only after an historical analysis of the influence exerted by the main currents of prerevolutionary social thought and institutions. Such an analysis must give primary consideration to nineteenth century Russia, the political trends no less than the social structure, literature no less than the quality of economic or religious thought. High tribute is due the American scholars contributing to *Continuity and Change in Russian and Soviet Thought*, for this is by far the best volume on the subject of Russia's historical heritage. Excellently edited by Professor Ernest J. Simmons, this symposium should interest all those either closely or remotely concerned with Soviet problems.

Continuity and Change in Russian and Soviet Thought is the fruit of a conference held at Columbia University's Arden House in March 1954. The participants tried to determine the points of contact and the divergencies between the thinkers and theories of nineteenth century Russia and those of this century, with 1917 as the focal point on the curve of evolution. The conference discussions were carried on under six broad subject headings, and the book has continued this division. The first section is devoted to economic thought; the second, to concepts of democracy and of authoritarianism; the third, to the question of collectivism and rationalism in the field of knowledge, of philosophy, and of science; the fifth deals with literature and society; and the sixth and last with Russia's international relations. Each of these problems is discussed by a different group of scholars, while evaluation of the degree and type of continuity between pre-revolutionary and Soviet thought is often left to the report summarizing the discussions within each section.

To try to determine the relation between past and present is an extremely difficult thing and, in a certain sense, risky, for success depends largely on the method employed and the assumptions on which it is based. In their reports summarizing the discussion on the relationship between the Russian and Soviet concepts of democracy and authoritarianism, collectivism and individiualism, Merle Fainsod and Mikhail Karpovich show with great insight the difficulties and limitations of such an undertaking. How shall one compare Pobedonostsev to Stalin, one an apostle of nineteenth century authoritarianism, the other the archtype of the twentieth-century totalitarian dictator? What values have they in common? How are they different? Must the emphasis be put on the fact that both had little respect for human nature, that they believed in forceful leadership, that they wanted to impose unity of thought on their subjects? Or should their differences be stressed: the authoritarianism of Pobedonostev contrasted with the totalitarian concept of Stalinist communism? The danger is that, in taking as the point of departure in such analyses the study of a given question, at different stages, in diverse personalities, in different environments, one is likely to make comparisons that will be too succinct or to make *rapprochements* that are too superficial. As Merle Fainsod says:

> In a symposium devoted to Pobedonostsev, to Miliukov, and Maklakov, to Lenin, and to Stalin, it is important to stress that there is a deep gulf dividing authoritarianism from totalitarianism, and if we treat the two as identical political formations, we end by revealing our inability to distinguish between continuity and change. (p. 179)

One might add to this observation, in agreement with A. Kojève,[1] that all tyranny has as its purpose a desire for Hegelian "recognition," and that in this

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The Reverend Henri Chambre, a noted commentator on Soviet affairs, is the author of *Le marxisme en Union Soviétique*, Paris, 1955.

[1] "Tyrannie et sagesse," in Leo Strauss, *De la tyrannie*, Paris, Gallimard, p. 228.

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respect there is much in common between past tyrants and Stalin, at least as certain sections of N. S. Khrushchev's secret report describe him. If there is a gulf separating the forms of tyranny, it is due to the differences in the social systems under which the tyranny is exercised.

Several contributors to the symposium emphasize the view that certain elements of nineteenth-century Russian revolutionary and social thought persist in modern Soviet thought. The consensus seems to be, however, that although the Bolsheviks were much more deeply rooted than the Mensheviks in Russian experience and prerevolutionary thought (a thesis previously put forward by Nikolai Berdyayev in his book, *The Origin of Russian Communism*),[2] the particular nature of the Bolshevik Party was largely a result of the manner in which it was formed, and especially of Lenin's dynamic leadership. For example, a vital factor in the success of the Bolsheviks was the fact that, although from the 1850's onward Russian nineteenth-century revolutionary parties were concerned mainly with the agrarian problem and with how to win over the peasantry, up to 1914 no Russian political party had developed a program which could deal successfully with the agrarian problem. Furthermore, although there had been some industrialization in the late nineteenth- and early-twentieth centuries the overall picture of the Russian economy had not radically changed by 1914. Thus, even in 1917 it seemed to almost every party except Lenin's that the agrarian problems could be solved by the old accepted formulas. Lenin, however, not wedded to the old Social Democratic conceptions, presented a strikingly simple and appealing program to the land-hungry peasantry, and with his tactical genius gave his party the advantage in the new situation created by the havoc of war and the dissolution of the monarchy.

The discussion on concepts of community (or *sobornost*) clearly shows that there are no common grounds between the concepts of society developed by the Soviets (particularly by A. Vishinsky) and those preached by the Slavophiles and the other nineteenth-century thinkers. The same is true of the Messianism, studied in the last section. Although the various forms of Messianism advocated in the nineteenth-century were usurped by the Soviet leaders, the process was a confused one. When the Soviet leaders had to appeal to Great Russian patriotism, they were forced to espouse ideas very similar to those of the nineteenth-century Slavophiles; but the historical, political and social contexts are quite different.

It would probably be very useful and interesting to continue the research begun in this symposium not only by analyzing the doctrines or points of view held by Russian or Soviet thinkers and men of action, but by determining what have been the major lines of development of a certain number of institutions, in such areas as law or economics, noting both the common characteristics which reveal the genius of the Russian people, and the political and social conditions which reveal the different objectives of the Soviet regime. For example, it would be particularly interesting to see what the various forms of Soviet law, particularly civil law and penal law, owe to Russian and Roman law. There are other areas which have been little explored up to now, and in which further research could be profitably undertaken.

But the symposium edited by E. J. Simmons is already sufficiently rich in observations, suggestions, and theories to be a valuable contribution to the study of Russian sources of present Soviet thought. Other examples of the wealth of provocative material in the volume are A. Gerschenkron's suggestive remarks on the relation between the beginnings of the industrialization of a country and radical ideologies (*e.g.*, Saint-Simonism in France in the early 1830's, Marxism in Russia in 1917—pp. 107–108); H. Marcuse's discussion on Stalin's uses of the Marxist dialectic (p. 348), and G. T. Robinson's theory attributing the immaturity of Soviet ideology in part to the irrationality of the thought of the Russian sects (p. 359).

The reviewer must content himself, however, with pointing out these ideas in passing, urging the reader to study this important contribution of American research centers to the examination of the nature and origin of Soviet ideology.

[2] New York, Scribner's, 1938.

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Stalin's Accomplices

IT was possible to foresee in the very manner in which the Bolshevik party was born the process by which the dictatorship of the proletariat would be transformed into the dictatorship of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and its Politburo, then into the dictatorship of the Secretariat, and finally into the tyranny of a single man.

Commenting on the Bolshevik-Menshevik split at the Social-Democratic Congress of 1903, Leon Trotsky pointed out that Lenin's methods would lead to a state of affairs where "the Party organization is substituted for the Party, the Central Committee is substituted for the organization, and finally dictatorship is substituted for the Central Committee."[1] And Georgi Plekhanov, the intellectual mentor of both Lenin and Trotsky, predicted in 1905 that "in the end everything will revolve around a single man, who, *ex providentia*, will centralize all power in himself."[2]

AFTER Lenin's death his closest aides spoke with undisguised passion of the need for collective leadership. Zinoviev addressed the Fifth Congress of the Comintern (1924): ". . . the international leadership must become more collective . . ." he said, "Lenin is no more; we must create a collective organ, an organ of iron that will really play a guiding role and embody the collective mind of all the parties." And in 1927 at the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party, Stalin himself praised the leadership in the following terms: ". . . our Central Committee and our Control Commission . . . are one of the most democratic and collectively functioning centers that our Party has ever had . . ."

Three years after the death of Stalin, however, Krushchev chose to give the world a different picture of the Communist Party: for twenty-five years, he told his audience, there did *not* exist a collective leadership in the party. Stalin made all the decisions himself. Stalin committed monstrous, despicable crimes—by himself. Stalin sent thousands of innocent Communists to their death—by himself, without the concurrence of his closest "comrades-in-arms." Stalin fostered a cult of himself—without the approval of the members of his Politburo. Stalin was a despot, a megalomaniac, a paranoiac—but they, the "Leninist core of the Central Committee"—were merely his hapless victims.

Is this picture true? Is it true that this very man, absolutely devoid of prestige at the time of Lenin's death, usurped the power of life and death over a population of some two hundred million souls through his own personal machinations, stealthily, furtively, unbeknownst to others? The answer is simple: No. Stalin did not attain his exalted position all by himself—he had accomplices.

OF the several men now in the "collective leadership," Lazar Kaganovich, as the chief artisan of Stalin's extraordinary political fortune, deserves special attention. A cobbler by trade, and himself a Jew, Kaganovich first attracted attention by his inflexible hostility toward Jewish labor organizations, particularly the *Bund* and the Socialist-Zionists. After the February-March Revolution he was sent by the Saratov Soviet to Petrograd, where he rose to membership on the Executive Committee of the Soviet. In 1918 he was sent to Nizhni-Novogrod as chief of the local Communist and Soviet organs, and here he met Nikolai Bulganin, then an obscure official in the regional Cheka. In Voronezh in 1919 Kaganovich came to the attention of Stalin, who immediately recognized his real talents as an organizer. In June 1922 Kaganovich was chosen chief of the Central Committee's Organization and Instruction Section. From that time until Stalin's death in March 1953 Kaganovich was the decisive instrument of Stalin's will to power.

At first his usefulness to Stalin was as chief of the Organization and Instruction Section, for this section controlled the vote of all party functionaries. At Kaganovich's will party personnel were placed, transferred or fired. Working through Kaganovich, Stalin was able by transfers, demotions, and promo-

[1] *Our Political Tasks*, Geneva, 1904.
[2] *Journal of a Social-Democrat*, Geneva, 1905.

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tions to remove all human barriers to his ambitions and to reward those who were ready to follow him blindly. Stalin was able to form the local and regional directing committees to his own liking, and in this manner he attained control over the party conferences and congresses. Soon he had collected the power to begin the reign of terror which crushed all inclination to resist the establishment of totalitarian despotism.

Kaganovich rose in rank from year to year. In 1924 he became a member of the Central Committee, holding the position of secretary (under Stalin) until 1925. In 1926 Kaganovich became an alternate member of the Politburo; in 1930 he became a full member. Stalin recalled him to the party secretariat in 1928 and Kaganovich remained there till 1939, taking over a number of other functions, among them, from 1930 to 1935, that of first secretary of the Moscow Regional Party Committee. In this latter capacity he placed Malenkov at the head of the cadre section and had Bulganin elected president of the Moscow Soviet. At that time Kaganovich singled out a lowly militant, Nikita Khrushchev, to be secretary of the district (*rayon*), and in 1935 Khrushchev succeeded him in the secretariat of the Moscow Regional Committee. Kaganovich went on to hold a series of top-level posts: Commissar of Communications (1935–1944), Commissar of Heavy Industry (1937), Commissar of the Fuel and of the Petroleum Industries (1939), as well as many others. In all of these posts Kaganovich distinguished himself by his ruthless implementation of Stalin's every order. By the time Stalin died Kaganovich had risen to be a member of the Party Presidium and also First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers.

ALTHOUGH he collaborated with Stalin for nearly 30 years Molotov's biography is incomparably duller than Kaganovich's. Whether as Secretary of the party, Chairman of the Council of Commissars, or as Commissar or Minister of Foreign Affairs, he participated in all the crimes that the "collective leadership" is now denouncing—but so slavishly as to make his role almost tedious to detail. Some reproach him especially for his role in concluding the pact with Hitler, in the talks with Ribbentrop, in the partitition of Poland, for his trip to Berlin during the war, his protestations of friendship toward the Nazis and insolent enmity toward the liberal democracies. But his complicity with Stalin was total—no greater in one case than in any other.

Voroshilov, whom Stalin raised to the rank of People's Commissar for War and membership in the Politburo, might likewise tell of long and complete complicity with Stalin. More than anyone else Voroshilov is responsible for the legend of Stalin's military genius, especially by his signing of a shameless apologia entitled "Stalin and the Red Army" (1929) and by his subsequent mendacious articles, primarily "Stalin, Builder of the Red Army" (1939) and "A Genius as Leader in the Great Patriotic War" (1949). Small wonder that Voroshilov praised Stalin so lavishly—for he had a hand in all of Stalin's crimes, especially in the purge of more than 30,000 officers. And now the crowning irony—Khrushchev invites Voroshilov to muster the courage to write the truth about Stalin—that is, to discredit the "genius as leader"!

Mikoyan's career, like that of Molotov or Voroshilov, owes nothing directly to Kaganovich. He served under Stalin as Secretary of the North Caucasus Regional Committee at a time when Voroshilov was the commander of that military district. Transferred to Moscow in 1926, Mikoyan was promoted to alternate in the Politburo and assumed the post of Commissar of Commerce. A full member of the Politburo in 1935, he became vice chairman of the Council of Commissars in 1937, *i. e.* at the height of Stalin's terrorism, and he retained that post through all the sinister turns of Stalin's reign.

ADD to the four oldest accomplices of the dead tyrant the three above-mentioned proteges of Kaganovich: Bulganin, Malenkov, and Khrushchev.

Bulganin, going from the regional Cheka of Nizhni Novgorod to the central Cheka in Moscow, devoted himself especially to discipline in the army, in which capacity he came into intimate contact with Voroshilov. After the Civil War Bulganin held posts in many high-level economic agencies, and then presided over the Moscow Soviet, working in close collaboration with Kaganovich and Khrushchev. He was rewarded for his loyalty during the terrible purges of 1936–38 with the position of deputy chairman of the Council of Commissars, in which capacity he held various important jobs. During the war he carried out some of Stalin's most diabolical schemes, among them the abominable provocation of the Warsaw uprising, which the Nazis were able to drown in seas of Polish blood. Stalin rewarded him by appointing him an alternate (1946) and then a full member of the Politburo (1948) and also (in 1947) Minister of the Armed Forces.

Malenkov had also gained the favor of the "morbid monster," as George Kennan has dubbed Stalin. It

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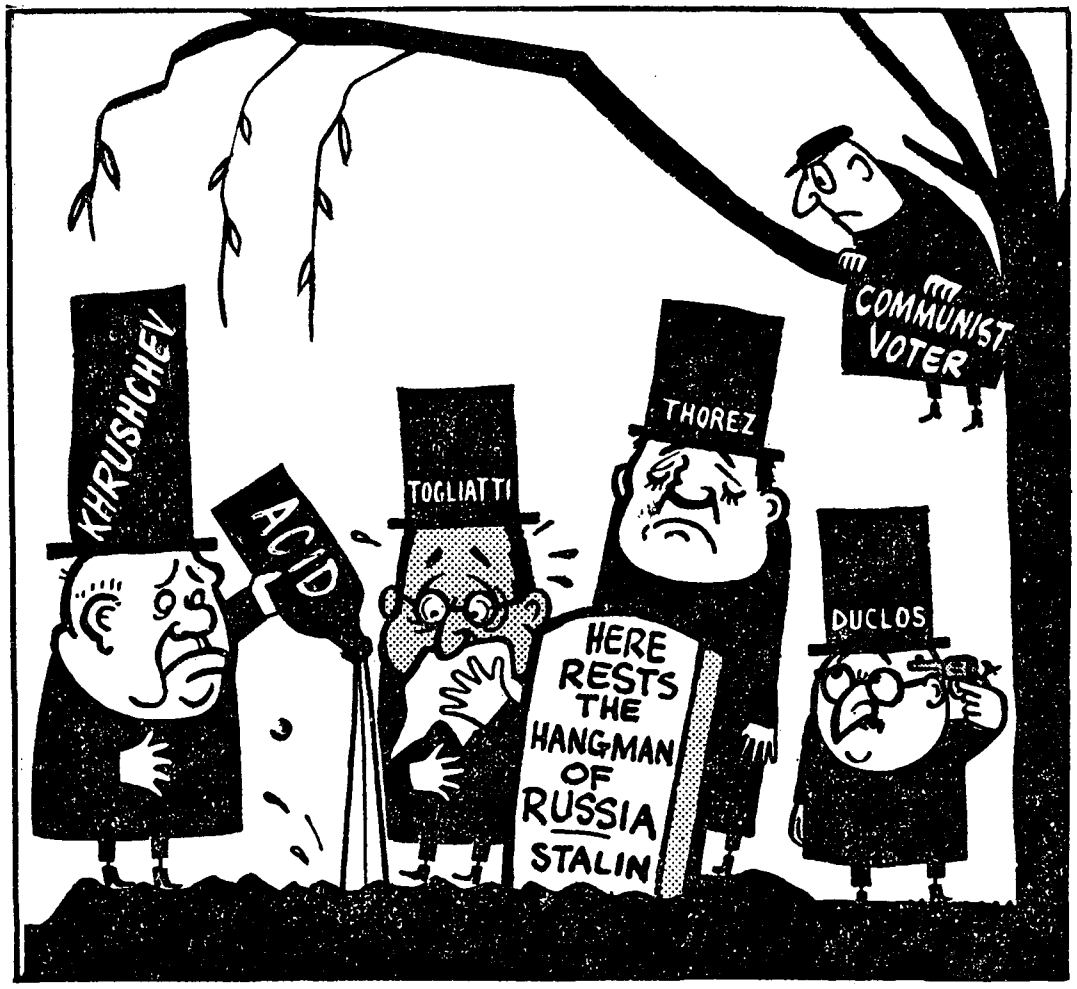
would be tiresome to detail his career as a Stalinist official and police aide from his debut in the cells of the institutions of higher learning to the post of personal secretary to Stalin and the leadership of the Central Committee's cadre section. He was an alternate (1941), then a member (1946) of the Politburo. He became a member of the Central Committee in 1939. Stalin appointed him to a number of posts—especially during the war—notably in the Defense Committee, and finally in the Secretariat of the Party (1946), from which he was dislodged only after the death of Stalin. For nearly a quarter of a century he shared the collective complicity of Stalin's successors.

KHRUSHCHEV is the same type of leader of which Kaganovich is the prototype. A worker lightly dusted with pseudo-Marxist instruction in a School for Workers, the *Encyclopedia* edited in Moscow in 1955 says of him that he was "one of Stalin's closest companions in arms," a title which henceforth no one will envy him. After a period at the Industrial Academy he held various positions in the Moscow Party under Kaganovich, whom he succeeded in 1935; in 1938 he was sent to the Ukraine to replace Stanislav Kossior as Secretary of the party. In the Ukraine he held different high-level party and government posts, and in 1949 Stalin elevated him to the position of Secretary of the party in Moscow. In 1939 he was admitted to the Politburo, having been an alternate member since 1938 and having been admitted to the Central Committee in 1934, which gives some idea of the services he rendered Stalin. After the latter's death he supplanted Malenkov as First Secretary of the party and became the spokesman for "collective leadership."

As such, at the Twentieth Congress, he pronounced the famous indictment of Stalin. He denounced Stalin "monstrosities," the crimes and tortures, saying



Opland in De Volkskrant, Amsterdam

"Look out, Comrade, you're spilling it on yourself."

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of Beria, his erstwhile colleague: "That criminal scaled the various echelons by stepping on an enormous number of cadavers." But that is likewise true of Khrushchev himself, of Kaganovich, of Molotov, Voroshilov, Mikoyan, Bulganin, and Malenkov. Which of their names would be known today if they had not contributed to the extermination of Lenin's comrades? They are all perched on mountains of corpses, all accomplices of Beria and his predecessors Yezhov and Yagoda—they are all accomplices of Stalin.

BORIS SOUVARINE

Boris Souvarine is a noted French expert on communist affairs, and author of the classic biography of Stalin, *Stalin*, (Knopf, New York, 1940).

Recent Studies on Communist Affairs

GERMANY

Ist Russland Anders Geworden? (Has Russia Changed?), Symposium by I. Silone, W. Lippman, E. Crankshaw, D. Macdonald, E. Halperin, F. Borkenau, in *Der Monat*, Berlin, June 1956.

IT would be difficult to find a more important and at the same time more controversial subject than the question discussed in *Der Monat's* symposium. If the discussion fails to bring out any spectacular conclusions, that very fact is indicative of the cautious objectivity with which the participants approach the question. In the words of Franz Borkenau, "no theme in the entire realm of Soviet occurrences is less susceptible to prophecies than de-Stalinization."

Nevertheless, the analyses presented are by no means sterile; on the contrary, they are illuminating and provocative. Two basic conclusions which emerge implicitly or explicitly from the discussion are: 1. the Soviet world finds itself in a period of transition, in a situation of relative fluidity, with the outcome still very much in doubt; 2. whatever the eventual course of developments in the communist world, it will pose a number of new problems and new policy alternatives for the non-Communist countries.

Ignazio Silone, the well-known Italian ex-Communist writer, and Dwight Macdonald, a leading American publicist, point out that, despite recent changes in the Soviet Union, the monolithic character of the Soviet state and society remains completely intact. Only when diversity of political opinion is freely permitted and actually fostered through the press and all other media of communication will it be possible to speak of a basic change in the Communist system, says Silone.

Dwight Macdonald believes that the apparatus of repression might easily be exploited by one of the Soviet leaders for the purpose of seizing absolute power à la Stalin. He also points out that the destruction of the Stalin symbol has not solved the basic question of how key components of a totalitarian system can be dismantled without bringing down the entire structure. Until the present collective leadership demonstrates that it can solve this dilemma, the future must remain seriously in doubt.

Edward Crankshaw, Soviet expert for the London *Observer*, and Ernst Halperin, East European correspondent for the Swiss newspaper, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, take a more optimistic view of the changes in the USSR. Both believe that the concessions which have been made were the inevitable aftermath of the death of Stalin, the result of powerful internal and external pressures which continue to operate in the Communist world, and which may lead to further startling transformations.

Mr. Crankshaw, who recently visited the USSR, puts much stress on the comparative joviality and greater flexibility shown on many occasions by the present Soviet leaders, and he also sees the free atmosphere reflected in a new spirit of self-confidence exhibited by the Soviet intelligentsia. The Soviet leadership, Mr. Crankshaw asserts, cannot and will not turn the clock back to another Stalin nightmare,

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but instead will strive to preserve its position at home and abroad by more peaceful methods, rather than by coercion and intimidation.

Mr. Halperin carries this line of thinking still further. The Soviet leaders intend to preserve the rule of the party bureaucracy by making it the vehicle and exponent of reform in the country. This process, once begun, Mr. Halperin writes, may actually force the party to carry out measures amounting to the liquidation of the dictatorship in its present form.

Franz Borkenau sums up the preceding theoretical discussion. He contends that Mr. Crankshaw's thinking is based on unscientific, "intuitive" impressions, while Mr. Halperin's analysis misinterprets the true nature of the Communist bureaucracy. According to Mr. Borkenau, the party bureaucracy, devoid of a program and of strong leadership, continues to be torn by factional strife. Khrushchev is seeking to consolidate his position at home and abroad in the hope of eventually crushing all others and achieving complete domination. Whatever changes and concessions have occurred, he says, have been symptoms of these internecine struggles and the accompanying degenerative processes.

The final contribution to the symposium is by Walter Lippmann, the distinguished American political analyst. Mr. Lippmann speculates whether the dethronement of Stalin is not symptomatic of the rising power of the Soviet Army, which has forced the party leaders into what is for them a most risky adventure. The outcome of the process remains uncertain, he writes, but the foreign policy of the Soviet Union is not likely to abandon its traditional imperial goals of hegemony over Eastern Europe and expansion toward the East.

The variety of ideas expressed above is eloquent testimony to the seriousness and painstaking determination to seek the truth, which animates this distinguished body of writers and publicists. It is also ample proof that, far from accepting arbitrarily conceived interpretations, political observers in the free world are weighing developments in the Communist orbit with both caution and open minds.

L. L.

FRANCE

The Thaw and After: Arts and Literature after the Twentieth Congress, *Soviet Culture*, Paris, No. 6, July 1956.

THE main conclusion that emerges from this review of the arts and literature in the past half year or so is that the post-Stalin liberalization is being kept within the ideological limits prescribed by Zhdanov in the period 1946–48; or, put differently, that the party is willing to experiment with a certain amount of freedom, but never at the expense of its control over the intellectual and artistic life of the country.

The result of this half-hearted liberalism is an artistic landscape replete with contradictions. On the one hand the party stalwarts in literature fulminate against those who "have forgotten all about the party-spirit (*partiinost*) in literature"; on the other hand, a number of writers who had been purged during the Zhdanovite period have staged a comeback, and some current writing does show an absence of the grosser aspects of Stalinist esthetics. Similarly, in painting, "formalistic prejudices" are denounced with as much vigor as before, but at the same time some Western *genres* are no longer proscribed. Soviet composers have now been enabled to reject some of the most ludicrous principles of the Stalinist era, to embrace modernism, to reevaluate 19th-century Western composers, and even to champion (though at the risk of exposing themselves to severe party criticism) atonalism and other contemporary schools of music.

In the opinion of the author of this report, the lackadaisical nature of the present "thaw" is due to a number of factors, among them the fear of some intellectuals to go too far, and the reluctance of others, too deeply immersed in the practices of the past, to initiate a genuine reversal that would endanger their standing as artists and bureaucrats. But principally the current situation reflects the continuing contradiction in the Soviet attitude toward the arts: on the one hand, a demand for creativity and production coupled with recognition that lack of freedom breeds sterility; on the other, a demand for conformity and ideological orthodoxy which are necessary to preserve the party's rule over the arts. The present relaxation merely underscores this contradiction.

"The Thaw and After" comprises the entire July issue of *Soviet Culture*, a new publication sponsored by the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and edited by the well known writer Walter Z. Laqueur. Other recent issues were devoted to current developments in Soviet psychology and post-Stalinist historiography. These studies represent a welcome addition to scholarly literature in the field of Soviet affairs.

A. B.

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TRAINING THE NEW SOVIET ELITE

In his imaginative article, "The Soviet Ruling Class," (*Problems of Communism*, May–June 1956), Professor Seton-Watson expressed the belief that the special boarding schools which Mr. Khrushchev proposed at the Twentieth Party Congress are "designed in part to compensate the present upper intelligentsia—that is, to preserve relatively exclusive opportunities for the education of their children in the face of keener competition in other schools" resulting from the abolition of secondary school fees. This interpretation appears to stem from Professor Seton-Watson's thesis that the party rulers are highly sensitive to the urgings, and indeed pressures, of the state bureaucracy, in this sense the traditional concern of "bourgeois" parents for the education of their offspring. I would, however, not only question that the proposal for the special schools was motivated by the party rulers' solicitude for the state bureaucrats, but would maintain that it was dictated largely by narrowly absolutist considerations and in fact runs counter to the personal desires of its alleged beneficiaries.

Mr. Khrushchev prefaced his remarks about the establishment of the special schools with a statement that, besides realizing a new upsurge of material power, it was necessary also to create "the essential spiritual premises" for attainment of the Communist utopia. He then proceeded to make clear that it was impossible to rely exclusively on the family and school, the "most important hearths for the socialist character-building of children." Here, I think, lies the clue to the motivation for the special schools: a realization by the supreme rulers that they cannot trust the state bureaucrats to instill orthodox, regime-sponsored values in their children. A more or less candid recognition of this may be found in the following passage from the leading article in the organ of the Soviet Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, *Semya i Shkola* (Family and School), No. 11, 1954:

Still not rarely, unfortunately, it is namely the family which is the source of children's infection by survivals of Philistine "philosophy," with its indifference toward the civic good, its conciliatory attitude toward abuse, lack of principle, and inclination toward superstitions. One at times encounters such phenomena even in those families where the parents are worthy Soviet citizens, honorable workers [*Trabotniki*], *conscious citizens.*

How is one to explain such a contradiction? By the fact that some parents mechanically divide their lives into two isolated parts: public, productive life . . . and personal, family life. And if, in the first, they live actively and strive to abide by the new laws of Soviet public life, in the second they not infrequently surrender themselves to customary traditions, prejudices, and survivals of the old, dead way of life.

My belief that the special isolated schools do not stem from the wishes of the state bureaucrats is, I believe, supported by refugee testimony to the effect that, during the 1930's, family life was one of the few outlets then available to the Soviet citizenry for genuine relaxation and pleasure. It is not merely plausible that this remains true today; the fact appears to be documented by *Semya i Shkola's* reference to "survivals of Philistine 'philosophy'." As far as apprehension concerning educational opportunity is concerned, I cannot see why a Soviet official need worry about his son's or daughter's prospects for educational advancement being endangered by abolition of the secondary school fees; he still has the advantage of the almighty *blat*, and his children also enjoy a tremendous intellectual advantage over their working class coevals in the form of superior material and cultural facilities in the home. And as for Mr. Khrushchev's statement that admission to the schools would have to be "exclusively by the desire of the parents," I would accept this to mean that entry would be as voluntary as subscription to state loans and marching in May Day processions.

While not subscribing to the view that the party center is entirely impervious to the aspirations of those who man the machinery of public and economic administration in Soviet society, I think that, in the proposal for the special schools, we are witnessing not a rewarding of the bureaucracy by a grateful or sympathetic party leadership, but rather a punishment of this officialdom for its failure to rear a devoted, as distinct from loyal, youth.

London, England **S. Ploss**

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